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William Ramsay
University of Glasgow.
J. Scott.

# FRAGMENTS

OF

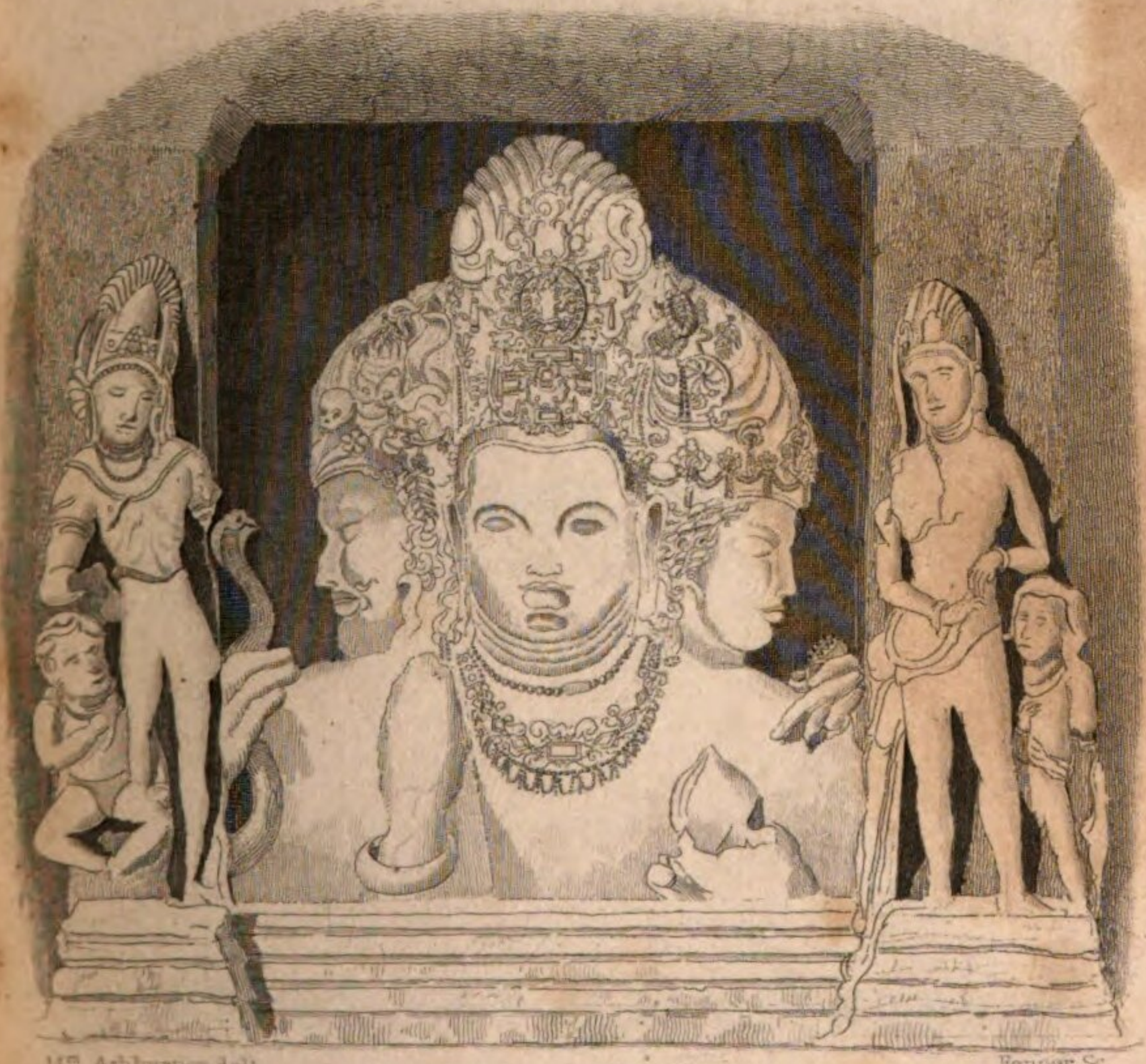
# VOYAGES & TRAVELS

BY

## CAPTN BASIL HALL, R.N.

**SECOND SERIES.**

VOL. III.




ELEPHANTA CAVE. BOMBAY.

PRINTED FOR R. CADELL, EDINBURGH,
AND WHITTAKER & Cº LONDON.

1832.

# FRAGMENTS

William Ramsay.

OF

# VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

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By CAPTAIN BASIL HALL, R.N.

F.R.S.

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## Second Series.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

## VOL. III.

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ROBERT CADELL, EDINBURGH;

WHITTAKER, TREACHER, & CO. LONDON.

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M.DCCC.XXXII.

W6/62/393

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# FRAGMENTS

OF

# VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

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## Second Series.

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## CHAPTER I.

### BOMBAY.

I HAVE seen some persons who, after losing their friends, their health, or their fortunes in India, have looked back to that bright country without pleasure; but I am not sure that I ever met any one who arrived in it without great satisfaction, or who could hail the first glimpse of a world so totally new without feelings of curiosity more than commonly excited. For my own part, I was thrown into a high fever of wonder and enjoyment; and assuredly, as long as I have a trace

of memory left, must retain the recollection of that happy period carved brightly and distinctly on my mind.

Early on the morning of the 11th of August, 1812, we first made the coast of Asia; and, on steering towards the shore, discovered, close under the land, a single sail, as white as snow, of a cut quite new to our seamanship, and swelled out with the last faint airs of the land-breeze, which, in the night, had carried us briskly along shore. As we came nearer, we observed that the boat, with her head directed to the northward, was piled half-mast high with fruits and vegetables, cocoa-nuts, yams, plantains, intended evidently for the market of Bombay. The water lay as smooth as that of a lake; so we sheered close alongside, and hailed, to ask the distance we still were from our port. None of the officers of the Volage could speak a word of Hindustanee; and I well remember our feeling of humiliation when a poor scullion, one of the cook's assistants, belonging to the governor's suite, was dragged on deck, with all his grease and other im-

perfections on his head, to act as interpreter. Sad work he made of it; for, though the fellow had been in the East on some ten or twelve former voyages, the languages of the countries he visited had not formed so important a part of his studies as the quality of the arrack and toddy which they produced. The word Bombaya, however, struck the ear of the native boatmen, who pointed in the direction to which they themselves were steering, and called out "Mombay! Mombay!" This word, I am told by an oriental scholar, is a corruption of Moomba-devy, or the Goddess of Moomba, from an idol to which a temple is still dedicated on the island. Others, less fanciful in their etymology, say that the Portuguese gave it the name of Bom-Bahia, on account of the excellence of its Port. That nation held possession of Bombay from the year 1530 to 1661, when it was ceded by the crown of Portugal in full sovereignty to Charles II.

It was not long before we came in sight of several headlands, which are so well described by that great hydrographer,

my excellent friend Captain James Horsburgh, that we knew our place almost as well as if we had been sailing between the Motherbank and Spithead. When the next day broke, and the sun rose upon us over the flat-topped Gauts or mountains of the Mahratta country, I remember feeling almost at a loss whether I had been sleeping and dreaming during the night, or whether the gay reality, with its boundless vista of promises, was still before my eyes. The imagination and the reason were both more or less heated by the simple facts of having actually seen the shores of India, having heard the language of the East from the mouths of its natives, and beheld the forms and figures, and that dusky aspect which induced its northern and fair-complexioned conquerors of old to style their new possession Hindoo-stan, or land of 'black men.' All these circumstances, though trivial, it is true, in themselves, were well calculated to give reality to pictures which, for many a long year before, I had busied my fancy with painting in colours drawn partly from the

Arabian Nights and Persian Tales, and partly, if not chiefly, from those brilliant clusters of Oriental images which crowd and adorn the pages of Scripture.

Besides the mere picturesque feelings excited by such reflections, I had accidentally acquired others somewhat more substantial perhaps, and practically useful, from being thrown a good deal into the society of officers who had served in various parts of India, and called my attention to the histories and to the political arrangements of our possessions in the East. What with fiction and what with truth, therefore, my head was pretty full of combustible materials, ready to be acted upon at once by any thing and every thing that should meet the eye on landing.

Captain Cook asserts somewhere, when speaking of the delights of voyaging and travelling, that to such rovers as he and his companions, nothing came amiss; and I can safely venture to boast, that, as far as this goes, I may claim a corner of my great brother-officer's mantle. At all events, in sailing over the Indian seas,

or travelling in those countries by land, I not only never met any thing that came amiss, but hardly ever met any thing which did not so much exceed in interest what I had looked for, that the grand perplexity became, how to record what was felt, or in any adequate terms to describe even the simplest facts, which struck the eye at every turn in that "wide realm of wild reality."

Of all places in the noble range of countries so happily called the Eastern world, from the pitch of the Cape to the islands of Japan, from Bengal to Batavia, nearly every hole and corner of which I have visited in the course of my peregrinations, there are few which can compare with Bombay. If, indeed, I were consulted by any one who wished as expeditiously and economically as possible to see all that was essentially characteristic of the Oriental world, I would say, without hesitation, "Take a run to Bombay; remain there a week or two; and having also visited the scenes in the immediate neighbourhood, Elephanta, Carli, and Poonah, you will have examined good

specimens of most things that are curious or interesting in the East."

For this remarkable distinction, quite peculiar, as far as I know, to that one spot on the earth's surface, this presidency is indebted to a variety of interesting circumstances. Bombay, as perhaps many people may never have heard before, is an island, and by no means a large one, being only between six and seven miles long by one or two broad. It is not, however, by geographical dimensions that the wealth of towns, any more than the power and wealth of nations, is determined. The harbour unites every possible desideratum of a great seaport: it is easy of access and egress; affords excellent anchoring ground; is capacious beyond the utmost probable demands of commerce; and, owing to the great rise and fall of the tides, is admirably adapted for docks of every description. The climate is healthy; and the ground, being diversified by numerous small ridges and hills, furnishes an endless choice of situations for forts, towns, bazars, and villages, not to say bungalows

or villas, and all sorts of country-houses, and some very splendid retreats from the bustle of business. The roads which intersect this charming island were beautifully Macadamised, as I well remember, long before that grand improvement was heard of in England; and as the soil of the island is made up of that rich kind of mould resulting from decomposed basalt or lava, the whole surface affords a good sample of the perennial verdure of tropical scenery, which dazzles and surprises the new comer, while its interest seldom, if ever, fails to rise still higher upon a more prolonged and intimate acquaintance.

Such are among the eminent physical advantages enjoyed by Bombay; but even these, had they been many times greater, would have been light in the balance compared to those of a moral, or rather of a political nature, which conspired in 1812 to render it one of the most important spots in that quarter of the globe. At the time I speak of, it was almost the only possession exclusively British within several hundred miles in any direction. The

enormous territory of the Mahrattas lay close to Bombay on the east; and I mention this one district because the name is more or less familiar to English ears, chiefly, perhaps, from its having been the scene of the Duke of Wellington's earliest campaign in command of an army. The brilliant course of that service was wound up by the well-known battle of Assaye, not the least hard fought of his hundred fields. Assaye is about twice as far from Bombay as Waterloo from London. To any one familiar with modern Indian history, the name of Basseen, where one of the most celebrated treaties that ever statesmen agreed upon was signed, will be well remembered. Then who is there that has not heard of the caves of Elephanta, those singular temples of the old Hindoos, excavated on the side of a hill on an island in the very harbour, and within one hour's row from the fort?

These, and many other circumstances, some military, some historical, give a very peculiar degree of liveliness to the interest we feel in that spot; and I certainly have as yet seen very few places on the globe

which fasten themselves with more tenacity on the memory. I allude chiefly to matters of taste, association, and other refinements, with which the natives of the countries surrounding Bombay have no concern. To them it possesses, or did then possess, exclusively, an interest of a different and far more important character. At that time it was almost the only spot in that range of country where persons and property were perfectly secure, and in which all men might safely display and enjoy their wealth to the utmost limits of their taste for ostentatious parade, or hoard it as parsimoniously as they pleased, without the slightest chance of arbitrary interference. In addition to this, every form of religious worship was not merely tolerated, but allowed to exercise itself with the most ample and equal freedom. Every native of Asia, or of any other country in the world, so long as he infringed none of the established laws of the Presidency, was allowed equal privileges; and as the advantages of security and freedom, in the most genuine senses of these words, were enjoyed under none

of the native governments adjacent, but, on the contrary, were almost entirely unknown in them all, Bombay became the natural place of resort for the wealthy from all parts of India lying on that side of the Peninsula, and indeed from many other regions much more remote.

The population of Bombay is about two hundred thousand; and I think it may be said with truth, that we can see nothing in China, or Java, or the Philippine Islands, or along the Malay Peninsula, or even in the interior parts of India, any single caste, or dress, or custom, or form of superstition, or any thing else, belonging peculiarly to Eastern manners, which we may not witness at Bombay in as genuine and apparently unsophisticated a condition as on the spot to which it properly belongs. In twenty minutes' walk through the bazaar of Bombay, my ear has been struck by the sounds of every language that I have heard in any other part of the world, uttered not in corners and by chance, as it were, but in a tone and manner which implied that the speakers felt quite at home. In the same short

space of time I have counted several dozens of temples, pagodas, joss-houses, and churches; and have beheld the Parsees, the lineal religious descendants of Zoroaster, worshipping fire; the Hindoos, with equal earnestness, bowing their heads to Baal in the shape of a well-oiled black stone, covered with chaplets of flowers and patches of rice; while in the next street the Mahometan ceremonies of the grand Moharem were in full display; and in the midst of all a Portuguese procession bearing an immense cross, and other Roman catholic emblems, as large as life.

I have no language competent to give expression to the feelings produced by the first contemplation of so strange a spectacle. I was startled, amused, deeply interested, and sometimes not a little shocked. The novelty of the scene was scarcely diminished by a further inspection; which may appear a contradiction in terms, but is not so in reality. The multitude of ideas caused by the first view of such an astonishing crowd of new and curious objects, obscures and confuses the observation, in a certain sense, and pre-

vents us from distinguishing one part from another. In like manner, I remember being almost stupified with astonishment, when Sir John Herschel first shewed me one of the great nebulæ or clusters of stars in his telescope at Slough. When, however, the philosopher unfolded the results of his own observations, and ventured to separate and distinguish the different orders of nebulæ and double stars, or pointed the instrument to the planet which his illustrious father discovered, and made me understand, or tried to make me understand, the revolutions of its satellites, I felt the confusion by which at first I was distracted gradually subsiding, while the fresh interest of the spectacle, strictly speaking, was greatly increased. And so I found it in India, especially at that most curious of places, Bombay, where the more I saw of the natives, the more there seemed still to discover that was new. It would be absurd to pretend that all this pedantic kind of reasoning process took place at the moment, for, in truth, I was too much enchanted to speculate much on the causes

of the enjoyment. I shall never forget, however, the pleasure with which I heard a native, with a bowl in his hand, apply to a dealer in corn for some of the grain called Sesamé. The word, in strictness, is not the Indian name for this seed, though it is used generally in the peninsula of Hindustan, and forms one of the ingredients of curry-powder. Til is the native word for the plant from which the oil of Sesamé is expressed. I need not say how immediately the sound recalled the 'Open, Sesamé!' of the Arabian Nights; and the whole of the surrounding scene being in strict character with that of the tale, I felt as if I had been touched with some magic wand, and transported into the highest heaven of Eastern invention. As I gazed at all things round me in wonder and delight, I could fix my eye on nothing I had ever seen before. The dresses, in endless variety of flowing robes and twisted turbans, flitted like a vision before me. The Hindoos, of innumerable castes, were there, each distinguished from the other by marks drawn with brilliant colours on his brow. There stood Persian

merchants with shawls and other goods from Cashmere, mingled with numerous Arab horse-dealers careering about; Malays from the Straits of Malacca, chatting familiarly with those good-natured, merry fellows, the long-tailed Chinese, whose most ungraceful Tartar dress and tuft contrast curiously in such a crowd with the tastefully arranged drapery and gorgeous turbans of the Mahometans and Hindoos.

Some of these groups were fully as much distinguished by their sandals and slippers as by their head-gear; others arrested the attention by the sound of their voices, and many by the peculiarity of their features and complexion. It really signified little which way the eye was turned, for it could rest on nothing, animate or inanimate, which was not strange and full of interest. Most of the trees which shaded us, and especially a tall variety of the palm tribe, commonly called the Brab, I had never seen before. It is called by botanists Borassus flabelliformis, or Tara Palm; Tara or Tair being the native word for the toddy which is yielded by these trees. It grows, in respect to its

stem, like the cocoa-nut, with a glorious set of projecting arms at the top. But these branches, unlike those of the cocoa-nut, do not send out lateral leaves along their whole length like the ostrich feather, which the cocoa-nut leaf resembles very much in form. They are smooth and naked to the end, on which is opened out, rather fantastically, a huge circular leaf, marked with divisions like those of a fan, radiating from a centre, each ray or division being sharp-pointed.

But the chief object of attraction, and I may well say of admiration, in this gay scene, was the appearance of the women, who are not only not concealed, but go about freely, and, generally speaking, occupy themselves out of doors in works not requiring any considerable strength, but a good deal of dexterity. Of course, this does not include the highest classes, who are kept quite secluded. The females appear to be the great water-carriers; and the pots or chatties, as they are called, which are invariably borne on the head, are of the most elegant forms imaginable. Indeed, when standing by the side of a

Hindoo tank, or reservoir, as I have often done for hours together, I have been reminded of those beautiful Etruscan vases, the discovery of which has given so new a character to modern forms. This practice of carrying all loads on the head is necessarily accompanied by an erect carriage of body, and accordingly the most graceful of dancers, even the matchless Bigottini herself, might have

"Snatched a grace beyond the reach of art"

from observing the most ordinary Hindoo girl on her return from the tank, with her hand sometimes just touching the vessel poised on her head, and sometimes not, so true is the balance, and so certain the bearer's step. The dress of these women consists chiefly of one strip of cloth, many yards in length. This narrow web is wound round the body and limbs with so much propriety, that while the most scrupulous delicacy could find nothing to censure on the score of deficiency in covering, it is arranged with such innate and judicious taste that even the eye of a sculptor could hardly wish

many of its folds removed. The figure of the Hindoos, both male and female, is small and delicate; and, although their features are not always handsome, there is something about their expression which strikes every stranger as singularly pleasing, perhaps from its being indicative of that patience, docility, and contentment, which are certainly their chief characteristics. We see at least, in every part of our Eastern empire, that with a little care, coupled with a full understanding of their habits and wishes, and backed by a thorough disinterestedness and genuine public spirit on the part of their rulers, the above-mentioned qualities of the Hindoos may be turned to the highest account in all the arts of war, and many of the arts of peace.

Perhaps not the least curious sight in the bazaar of Bombay are the ornaments worn by the women and children, by which, with the most lavish profusion, and the most ill-directed taste, they succeed in disfiguring themselves as much as possible. And this might lead us almost to suspect that their taste in the

other parts of their dress, like the gracefulness of their carriage, is the result, not of choice and study, but of happy accident. The custom of carrying their water-vessels on the head requires an erectness of gait during the performance of that duty, which may become the easiest and most natural at other times. And probably some circumstance incident to the climate may, in like manner, direct the fashion in adjusting their drapery.

Most of the women wear nose-rings of great dimensions. I have seen many which hung below the chin; and certainly to us this seems a strange ornament. I forget whether or not the Hindoo women cover their fingers with rings as our ladies do, but their principal fashion seems to consist in loading the wrists and ankles with armlets and bangles, as they are called, of gold and silver. The virgin gold generally used for this purpose, is almost always rich and grateful to the eye. But, I imagine, no art can make a silver ornament look any thing but vulgar. Just as we sometimes see persons in Europe crowd ring upon ring on

their fingers till all beauty is lost in the heap, and all taste sacrificed for the mere sake of ostentatious display; so, in India, I have observed women whose legs were covered with huge circles of gold and silver from the instep nearly to the knee, and their arms similarly hooped round almost to the elbow. The jingle made by these ornaments striking against one another gives ample warning of a woman's approach; a circumstance which has probably led to the notion that this custom of attaching, as it were, a set of bells to the heels of the ladies, may have been an institution of jealousy devised by the husbands of those warm latitudes to aid their researches after their gadding spouses. I cannot say how this theory squares with history; but I have never heard any hypothesis equally good to account for the still more ridiculous, not to say cruel, custom of covering the legs and arms of their poor little children with these rings. I have seen a girl three years old so loaded with them that she could not walk or hold out her arms; and I once counted no fewer than twenty heavy gold chains

on a child's neck, besides such numbers of rings on its arms and legs that the little thing looked more like an armadillo of the picture-books than a human being. Such is the passion of some Hindoo parents for this practice, that I have been assured they often convert their whole worldly substance into this most useless form of the precious metals, and thus transform their progeny into a sort of money-chest. Small happiness is it for these innocent wretches, however, who, as the head police-magistrate informed me, are not infrequently murdered for the sake of the property they carry about with them!

I have before remarked, that when a traveller is first thrown into such a scene as I have here alluded to, although his enjoyment certainly is very great, there often comes across him a feeling of hopelessness, when he admits to himself his total inability to record one hundredth, one millionth part, I may say, of the splendid original. Every thing is totally new to him; even the commonest implements of husbandry, the pots and pans, the baskets and barrels, the carts

and carriages, all are strange to his eyes, and far beyond the reach of his pen; while things which stand higher in the scale come still less within its range. Then what is he to do with the sounds he hears, or the motion he perceives? And strange it is to admit, but true, that the interest is at times actually increased by circumstances which are in themselves very annoying. I well remember submitting even to the intense heat and glare with great patience, and almost relish, in consideration of their being strictly in character with a scene I had so long ardently desired to witness. The formidable smell of assafœtida, which reigns in every Indian market, I nearly learned to bear without a qualm, for the same reason. Other annoyances I cared very little about; and had it not been for the well-cursed mosquitoes, I should not hesitate to declare, that, as far as travelling human nature is capable of happiness, I was perfectly happy when cruising about the bazaars of Bombay.

Full well am I aware that much of all this will appear to many excellent persons

who have been in the East, or who may visit it after me, as sufficiently fanciful and exaggerated; and there are many who will pass through the very scenes which excited in me so much rapture, and will have no more anxious wish than to get safely out of it before they are splashed with mud from the feet of the wild-looking, blue-skinned buffaloes, or have their toes trodden upon by bullocks with great humps between their shoulders. It is impossible to expect general sympathy for such things; and accordingly my English friends at Bombay used often to laugh heartily when I returned from these Arabian Night sort of excursions, with my head brim full of turbaned Turks, Hindoo pagodas, and all kinds of Oriental associations about the Indus and the Ganges, or Brahma and Vishnoo, or with speculations on the customs, languages, and manners, of the extraordinary collection of people I had been rambling amongst.

But there is one set of images and delightful illustrations, meeting the eye at every turn in India, which I have never

seen any person so insensible as not to attend to with unaffected interest. I allude to those numerous every-day customs of the East so often mentioned incidentally in the Scriptures, and with which our minds have become familiar from earliest infancy. We so naturally associate these customs with the sacred writings, that we are easily drawn to link the two indissolubly together. Before visiting Eastern countries, we almost fancy that because the events related in the Bible, and the characters who acted in them, have passed away and become matter of history, so also must the customs have disappeared which served as familiar illustrations between man and man, or between our Saviour and the human beings whom it was the object of his mission to impress with his doctrine. We are apt to be startled, therefore, when we find ourselves actually surrounded by scenes almost identical with those described in the Bible. Be all this as it may, I could never see a Hindoo female sitting by the steps of a well in India, with her arm thrown wearily over the unfilled water-

pot, without thinking of the beautiful story of the woman of Samaria, the association being perhaps helped by the recollection of a well-known Italian picture, in which the figures and the scenery are represented quite in the eastern style, such as I was now beholding it for the first time.

"Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, the other left," conveys scarcely any meaning to European readers. But in India, where we see constantly two female millers, sitting cross-legged on the ground, turning by one handle the upper of two small stones, we are at once struck with the force of the illustration used to explain the uncertainty which should prevail at the destruction of the City. It is difficult, on looking at two persons so engaged, to conceive a situation in which it would be less easy to remove the one without interfering with the other; and this point was admirably enforced by reference to a custom with which every listener in those countries must have been quite familiar. The industry of commentators on the Bible has, I observe, long ago discovered

the true explanation of this, and many other passages apparently obscure, but pregnant with meaning when duly investigated. Nevertheless, I aver that a whole quarto of commentaries on the above verse could not have impressed my mind with a tenth part of the conviction which flashed upon me when I first saw two women actually "grinding at the mill;" all unconscious, poor folks, of the cause of my admiration, and as yet ignorant, alas! of the sublime lessons, to enforce and explain which their humble task was referred to.

On the morning after my arrival at Bombay, I got up with the first blush of the dawn, and hastily drawing on my clothes, proceeded alone greedily in search of adventures. I had not gone far before I saw a native sleeping on a mat spread in the little verandah extending along the front of his house, which was made of basket-work plastered over with mud. He was wrapped up in a long web of white linen, or cotton cloth, called, I think, his cummerbund, or waist-cloth. As soon as the first rays of the sun peeped into his

rude sleeping chamber, he "arose, took up his bed, and went into his house." I saw immediately an explanation of this expression which, with slight variations, occurs frequently in the Bible, in connexion with several of the most striking and impressive of Christ's miracles, particularly with that of the man sick of the palsy. My honest friend the Hindoo got on his feet, cast the long folds of his wrapper over his shoulder, stooped down, and having rolled up his mat, which was all the bed he required, he walked into the house with it, and then proceeded to the nearest tank to perform his morning ablutions.

I remember mentioning this, amongst many other illustrations of the incidents recorded in Scripture, to a worthy old Scotch lady, upon whom I expected it to produce the same pleasing and satisfactory effect which it had wrought on me. I made, however, a great mistake, for so far from raising myself in her estimation, on the score of correct observation, I sunk, I fear irrecoverably, in her good graces, by presuming, as she alleged, to interfere with the wonder

of the miracle, the essence of which, according to her, I discovered to consist, not in the recovery of 'the man, who was made whole,' but in his being able to shoulder a four-post bed, and carry it off without inconvenience!

# CHAPTER II.

## A FAMINE IN THE LAND.

So many new and interesting objects were placed before me, on first landing in India, that I scarcely even dared to think of endeavouring to describe them, and, accordingly, the memorandums which I find amongst my papers bear strong marks of an overloaded topic. And although there can be no doubt that a superabundance of matter is a better source of composition than a scantiness of materials, yet we may even in these respects have too much of a good thing, and be cast, at first, into a sort of despair, from the utter hopelessness of being able to do the subject any kind of justice. After a time, when the novelty begins to wear off, we may expect to find leisure to study each circumstance carefully, and to record it with distinctness. How vain this hope is, every traveller, I am pretty sure, will admit. For

he soon discovers, that many of the most striking points which, from first engaging his attention, it would have been so important to seize and preserve, have either faded away, never to be recalled, or, which is more probable, their place has been supplied by others still more perplexing. It is certain, also, that many of those prominent differences between the manners of distant countries which, from first striking the observer, especially a sailor, who generally comes suddenly upon them, might constitute their chief interest in description, soon lose that bewitching sort of angular sharpness due, perhaps, to novelty alone; and as the mind cannot be forced back to its original state, the later descriptions will always be more or less feeble and confused, like objects seen through an ill-adjusted telescope. If it be the traveller's wish, therefore, as it certainly appears to be his duty, to preserve, for the benefit of his friends, the more prominent differences between his own country and those he visits at a distance, he must contrive to work vigorously on his first landing, and set down, as

well as he can, in order, or out of order, as many as possible of those prominent differences which actually strike him.

Some authorities, on the other hand, will have it, that the great use of travelling is to beget habits of correct observation, in order to the discovery of these very matters of fact, and to accustom the eye to view scenes of great bustle and variety, without allowing the judgment to be staggered by surprise; to exhibit truth, in short, stripped of the dazzling tinselly dress of novelty, and to enable the mind to take a rigidly correct view of things. This is all very fine talking in one's closet, but in practice it is rather bamboozling; and we may go on prosing for ever, to no great purpose, about such exercises having a tendency to strengthen the powers of discrimination, to wear off prejudices, and to enlarge our views; in short, to make a kind of wandering angels of us. I suspect, however, (and hope) we shall long continue far a-stern of this state of prim perfection, and that whenever or wherever new scenes are presented to our observation, we shall be childish enough

to be delighted with them as heretofore; and, without caring a straw whether what we set down is wise or foolish, prejudiced or liberal, angelic or diabolical, that we shall try earnestly, and with all honesty, to describe how and when and why we are pleased. To others must be left the task of making the requisite corrections.

As far as I can recollect, the first rational thing I did at Bombay, even before I had recovered from the intoxication of this glorious draught of novelty, was to engage a moonshee, or teacher of Hindoostanee, that I might take lessons in the colloquial dialect of India. This language is said to be a jargon, or lingua franca, a corrupt compound of many others. The greater part, I believe, is Persian, with a sprinkling of Arabic, a little Sanscrit, a few words of Portuguese, and here and there a faint dash of English. I remember, for example, hearing the English military words of command given to the native troops of an independent sovereign in the interior of the country, where the language in all other respects was Asiatic. "Shoulder arms"—"Present—Fire!"

conveyed distinct practical ideas to the minds of the native soldiers; but neither they nor the officers had the slightest idea of their actual meaning.

It was the practice of the Spaniards, Portuguese, and most other nations which sent out colonies, to teach their own language to the natives amongst whom they settled. With the English a different plan has, I believe, always been followed, as our habit has been to acquire for ourselves the languages of the countries over which we obtained any influence. This difference is probably to be explained by some essential distinctions in the objects which the respective mother countries have had in view. The Spaniards and the Portuguese, the great original colonisers both of the eastern and of the western worlds, desired—after the acquisition of gold—to impart their religious creed to the natives. Accordingly, the term subdued, or conquered, became with them almost synonymous with the word converted. It was soon found that both those two ardent passions, the thirst for gain, and the zeal for making religious

proselytes, were most readily advanced by teaching the natives the language, dress, and customs, of their conquerors. The object of the strangers being to obtain the precious metals, and to make converts at any cost, either of money or morality, they stuck at no means by which either purpose could be accomplished. As the end, and not the means, in both cases, became, therefore, the sole consideration, it may pretty safely be asserted, that in this unprincipled race, success brought with it no honour or permanent profit to the colonists, while it inflicted nothing but misery on the natives. The gold which these foreign conquests enabled the Spaniards, in an evil hour, to collect, also contributed to destroy the honest industry of the mother country, while it substituted in its place nothing but the mere phantom of ill-gotten wealth. On the other hand, the mass of absurd and unintelligible formalities which they imposed upon their nominal converts, under the name of religion, entirely broke up the ancient prosperity and contentment of the poor Indians, without imparting to them

one ray of genuine Christianity to lighten the double degree of darkness which appears to have followed the destruction of the religion of the Incas.

It must be confessed with shame, that the course adopted by the English, French, and other nations in North America, was really not much better; and however much we may now try to gloss over what we did in that country formerly, there can be no doubt of the fact, that we did extirpate the Indians as fast as we could, without thinking much, or even pretending to care much, about their souls. We made rather shorter work of it, indeed, than the Dons, and for the cross substituted sword and gun to pioneer the way before the wood-chopper's hatchet. In modern times, since the colonies have assumed the more dignified and responsible attitude of independent states, the instruction seems to have been bettered, as formal legislative enactments now take the place of powder and ball in the accomplishment of the self-same end. The same kind and degree of morality and tenderness for the Indians are to be

recognised as formerly; and the only difference is, that the rights of the aborigines are now 'extinguished' wholesale (such is the delicate term) by the most regular and well-debated acts of Congress.

To this rather satirical view of the matter, an American, or, as they are facetiously called by the French and others, an Anglo-American, might very fairly answer, first, that the removal, extinction, or extirpation of the Indians, (for these three words mean exactly the same thing,) is absolutely unavoidable; that is to say, things are now come to such a pass, that either the white men or the red men must abandon the country entirely:—and, secondly, the Anglo-American might remark to us, "You English have no right to reproach us for extirpating the Indian tribes which stand in the course of our great tide-wave of population; for it was you yourselves who taught us the way." To this we could certainly make no good answer.

These painful colonial speculations will be found to have a direct bearing on the

far more important and interesting subject of the occupation of the East Indies by the English; for I hope, by and by, to shew how much of the dissimilarity in our administration of the Asiatic portion of our empire may have arisen from the deep disgrace our forefathers incurred by their proceedings against the natives in the west. For the present, however, I must content myself with a mere allusion to this inviting topic, and return to the gay and novel scenes at Bombay.

I considered myself as very fortunate in having arrived in India just as a severe famine was beginning to make itself felt over a great part of the north-western portion of Hindoostan. It may not be generally known, that most of the rice crops of India, though not all of them, are dependent upon the actual quantity of rain which falls in the wet season for their very existence; so that when the rains prove scanty, which misfortune occurs at irregular periods, the inevitable consequence is not merely a scarcity, but an absolute famine. In some regions of India, where mighty rivers, such as the Indus and Cavery,

are entirely sucked up in the process of artificial irrigation, that is to say, are drawn off at the sides by what are called, I think, ‘ anicuts,’ this frightful evil may be averted. But, even in those cases, the most swollen rivers can supply but a comparatively narrow strip of verdure along their banks, when compared to the thousands of thickly peopled leagues of territory which must be left arid and hopeless when the windows of heaven remain unopened at their wonted season.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the details of those terrible scourges, the Asiatic famines, by which whole tribes are sometimes swept away, to be able to describe correctly, from personal observation, their immediate causes and consequences. I can only answer for what I saw, and from that some idea may be formed of what was passing in the interior. I have already mentioned that Bombay, being almost the only perfectly secure spot in that quarter of India, had drawn to it in the course of years many of the native inhabitants, together with much of the wealth of the adjacent countries, and

that the possessors of these riches, being under no apprehensions of the jealousy or cupidity of the government, lived in happiness, and spent their fortunes freely. The natural consequences followed this extensive demand for the luxuries, as well as the necessaries of life; traders of all descriptions flocked from the remotest corners of the world to reap the golden harvest, which only grew the faster and the richer for being well gathered in. Each year brought fresh and more wealthy settlers, and every sea-breeze wafted into the crowded and beautiful harbour of Bombay ships of every port from China to Peru. The resident population of all the native classes went on increasing under this prosperity, till, at the period I speak of (1812), it was rather more than a hundred and sixty thousand, though its numbers occasionally swelled to more than two hundred thousand at periods of public excitement, or high commercial enterprise. But what strikes the imagination as curious, or at least instructive, is the fact that the produce of the whole island would not feed its ordinary inhabitants for more than

a week; and yet there is not a spot, I will venture to say, on the earth's surface where the means of subsistence are cheaper, or in greater variety, and even profusion.

The explanation is almost too simple to require statement; but the consequences which followed the occurrence of the terrible famine in Guzerat, and other districts at no great distance, in 1812 and 13, are not quite so obvious, though highly valuable. The produce of the island itself being so extremely small compared to the demand, it follows that Bombay must import all its grain, and, as a matter of course, the corn-dealers form a most important set of men. These persons draw their supplies of rice, in ordinary times, chiefly from the Malabar coast, which lies between them and Ceylon, and not very far to the southward; while they import most of their wheat, maize, and some other grain, from the high grounds of the Mahratta states, lying directly to the eastward. The interest of these great corn-merchants induces them to keep at all times a considerable stock of grain on

hand, enough to feed the population for a period of more than a year. I have also some obscure recollection of the Government requiring them to retain a certain quantity. Be the cause what it may, there was actually stored in the granaries of Bombay, in the autumn of 1812, rice enough to have kept the population alive for fifteen months, even had there not arrived in the port another corn-ship in the interval. This position of things gave rise to one of the most tangibly interesting questions of political economy which I ever remember to have heard discussed.

The south-west monsoon, which blows from May to September, is the rainy season in that part of India; but it was now late in August, and no rain had fallen, nor was there much hope that, if it fell so late, it would be in time to save the rice-crop; so that, independently of the reported destruction caused by a flight of locusts in the north of India, experienced observers began to predict a famine in Cutch and Guzerat. There is perhaps no barometer, in these cases, so certain in

its indications as that of hunger, and, accordingly, it was soon discovered that all the ferries between the main land and the island of Bombay were crowded with half-famished natives, streaming in converging lines from all parts of the country towards this little island, which, I have already mentioned, was not in itself capable of raising, in the whole year, one-fiftieth part of the food required by its own inhabitants.

The resident native population of Bombay, at that time, may be thus stated in round numbers:

| | |
|---|---|
| Hindoos ..... | 103,786 |
| Mussulmen ..... | 27,811 |
| Parsees (worshippers of fire) .. | 13,156 |
| Jews ..... | 781 |
| Native Christians ..... | 14,454 |
| Permanent native residents | 159,988 |
| Add to these the European residents, and the European officers and troops ..... | 1,700 |
| Native troops (officered by British) ..... | 3,000 |
| And we have for the average fixed population of the island.. | 164,688 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Brought forward..... | 164,688 |
| Add the migratory or floating portion of the natives, who come and go according to seasons and other circumstances. | 52,012 |
| The additional number of total strangers driven into the island by the great famine of 1812 and 1813 appears to have been about ..... | 20,000 |
| Making a grand total of ..... | 236,700 |

The area of Bombay island is about $18\frac{1}{4}$ square miles, being between 7 and 8 miles long by 2 or 3 in breadth; so that taking the ordinary, or average population, there are about 9000 residents for every square mile; while in times of pestilence and famine in the adjacent states, it reaches nearly to 13,000 for each square mile. The houses may be reckoned at more than 20,000, and there occurred frequent instances of fifty, sixty, and even a hundred persons sleeping under one roof. I remember hearing of upwards of 300 persons being stowed away within the narrow limits of one building!

In all cases of approaching famine, there is another very sensitive test besides

that of actual hunger, by which the true state of these political-economical questions may be judged of. I mean the purses of those who have to supply the wants of families of women and children; it is then that the corn-merchants learn with wonderful precision what is likely to be the state of the demand. On this occasion it was observable at Bombay, that as each successive hour passed off without rain, up went the value of corn. But although in this way the price soon became very high, it was still so much lower than was eagerly given in the north, at Guzerat, and elsewhere in those countries where the prospect of famine was now almost certain, that the corn-dealers of Bombay hastened to load every vessel they could lay hold of, to export their rice to markets where it was in such superior demand. Of course, this exportation contributed to augment the price at Bombay, while fresh crowds of starving natives were pouring in every hour, and adding to the number of mouths, so as to give a most critical and interesting character to the situation of affairs.

"What is to be done?" said some of the members of the Government, justly alarmed. "Shall we shut the harbour altogether against the export of grain, and, since we have one year's certain supply on hand, secure our own existence for that period, under all circumstances? It is next to certain, that long before the year expires, additional supplies will pour in from Bengal, and other places, in which no failure of crop ever takes place. The cost will, no doubt, rise greatly in the bazaar here, and much misery will be the consequence, especially to those unhappy strangers who are rolling in upon us like the waves of the sea. Besides, self-preservation is the first law of nature, and as we have food, shall we not rather keep it while we have it, than risk having none, by allowing it to be exported, on the mere chance of more coming in? If we permit those countries where the famine rages to buy up our grain, it can prove but a single meal to them, while it will be certain death to us."

Other members of the council held, that to shut Bombay against the export of grain,

but to open it for imports, would be the very means of producing the calamity so much dreaded. "The instant you shut the port," said they, "all experience shews that the grain speedily rises to the famine price, and as this necessarily places it beyond the reach of the famishing crowds who are flying to this spot, which they believe, and not without reason, to be one of wealth and plenty, they will die in thousands amongst us. To feed the whole population for many months will be impossible, let us serve out the stock of provisions as carefully as we please; for it will be out of the question to discriminate between our own proper inhabitants and the strangers whom the famine elsewhere has driven upon our resources. It will prove quite in vain to give notice that famine prevails here likewise; the natives of all the adjacent countries are too strongly impressed with an idea of our inexhaustible resources to believe any such assertions, and, in spite of all we can say or do, they will find their way here, like flocks of wild fowl."

"The only method," continued these ex-

perienced and vigorous-minded men, "to avert much of the evil, and, in the most genuine sense of the words, to extend our influence and popularity, by really doing good to the inhabitants of India, whether they be our immediate subjects or not, is to adopt at once the manly step of declaring that the port of Bombay shall not be shut under any circumstances. Let us give out that, come what may, the corn-merchants shall be at liberty, as heretofore, freely to export their grain whenever they conceive it most for their own interest to do so. At the same time, let us take every means to let our wants be known in those parts of the country where there has been no failure of the crops. Indeed, this is hardly necessary; for the fact of an approaching famine in these regions has been already communicated to the remotest corners of the peninsula, and at this instant," said these gentlemen, "hundreds of vessels are probably taking in cargoes of grain for this coast. Now, as Bombay happens to be situated near the southern extremity of the districts which are threatened with famine,

every one of these vessels must pass by us, on their way to the gulfs of Cambay and Cutch; and, if they be not deterred by our indiscreet legislation, every grain-ship will have an obvious interest in looking into this port. Our harbour is so easy of access, is so commodious, its anchorage dues are so light, and, above all, it lies so directly in the track of these vessels on their way to the famine countries, while it is a couple of hundred miles short of them, that the merchants must naturally wish to terminate their voyage here, if they can do so with a fair profit on their adventure, rather than proceed so much farther to the north in search of a market.

"On the other hand, if we unwisely shut our port against exports, we shall deprive all these corn-ships of a free choice in this matter; and thus, while we selfishly forbid the export of grain, we may virtually be shutting ourselves out from its introduction at all. If we are merely to allow ships to bring in their corn, without permitting them to carry it away again when the market does not please them,

we shall probably exclude them altogether. But if we boldly fling open our gates to all goers, as well as to all comers, and proclaim over India that with us there shall be no restrictions whatsoever respecting the free export of grain, every vessel which comes near this great emporium of western India will take a peep in to learn what our prices are, and to make a calculation whether, upon the whole, it may not be the most profitable course to sell their cargo at Bombay for a much smaller sum of money, than to lose time, and incur other risks, in too greedily hunting for famine prices along the shores of Guzerat."

Fortunately, the governor and council were finally agreed on this point, and it was decided to keep the port open. But although no further controversy took place at head-quarters, there was stirred up a vast deal of angry discussion out of the council-chamber. There soon arose also various strenuous opponents to the measure, more especially amongst the natives, who were exceedingly alarmed at the resolutions adopted by Government; and many of the leading merchants were con-

stantly attacking, though in a friendly way, the chief secretary, Mr. Francis Warden. This gentleman, from being one of the most able, experienced, and kindest persons that ever exercised the high authority of his important station, was invariably appealed to by the natives of all parties. Such, indeed, had become their confidence, not only in his integrity and talents, but in his entire disinterestedness and fairness of purpose, that they often referred those questions to his decision upon which they were aware he differed from them, well knowing that his genuine public spirit would lead to his pronouncing a sound opinion, quite independently of any preconceived notions, or even previous declarations of his own.

I may mention, in passing, that this thorough reliance on the good faith of the persons who govern India is felt in all parts of the peninsula by the natives of every caste, and is one of the chief sources, if, indeed, it be not the very chief source, of our prodigious and permanent ascendency in the East. I had afterwards an opportunity of investigating

on the spot some of the most curious and important branches of our complicated authority in India; and I trust I may one day be enabled to place several material parts of this apparent mystery in a clear and popular light.

The wealthy native merchants of Bombay remonstrated vehemently against a policy which had never before been adopted within their recollection. They even predicted, with much earnestness and alarm, the extension of the famine to the presidency of Bombay, and offered to throw in large supplies of grain, provided the Government would only engage to restrain the export. The cunning corn-dealers, who had set on these petitioners, knew right well that the abundance of imported grain would turn entirely upon the degree of freedom with which the port was left open for that quantity to overflow which was not required. What they wanted, in short, was the monopoly of the market; for they had good information as to the state of the crops in other places, and had calculated exactly the portion which might be introduced with-

out lowering the price too much. All this was considered only fair matter of commercial speculation amongst the natives, if they could but succeed in persuading the Government to play into their hands.

In these semi-official discussions the straight-forward good sense of the secretary completely baffled the sophistry of the corn-dealers. He explained to a deputation of natives who had waited on him, that so long as there was no famine in Bengal, nor in those provinces south of Bombay whence its supplies of grain were generally drawn, the persons who had expressed so much anxiety about the possibility of a famine at the presidency, might rest assured that an unrestricted trade in corn was the wisest policy the Government could pursue, not only for the security of Bombay itself, but for the relief of the countries in the neighbourhood which were suffering from the famine. He likewise urged, that as it was the custom with the grain-dealers of the island always to keep one year's stock in store for the average home consumption of the island, they could themselves

regulate the supply, the prices, and all the other details of the trade, much better than the Government, or any of the mercantile communities of Bombay. The natives at large, therefore, he added, might be quite sure, that although the prices must, of course, during the famine, be higher than in ordinary times, the dealers, who knew their own interest, would take very good care to retain a sufficient supply for the consumption of the island.

Hormajee Bomanjee, the chief of the deputation, a Parsee of immense wealth, and a man of the highest character both amongst the English and the natives, shook his head, and declared he did not believe there was more than a day or two's supply of rice in the whole presidency. The secretary laughed at this, though he was not altogether without anxiety; for the imports, at first, by no means equalled what the Government had calculated upon, and the prices began to rattle up smartly. In the course of the week, however, fresh supplies poured into the island, and all further alarm on the score of a famine at Bombay was at an end.

The consequences which followed were in the highest degree important and satisfactory; for although the grain-merchants set about exporting rice in great quantities to the northward, the prices instantly fell at Bombay when the doubts were ended. It frequently happened, also, that when several vessels came into the harbour together, one or more of them actually tripped their anchor a few hours afterwards, on learning the prices, and sailed off to the north, in quest of a better market; while the others preferred landing their cargoes, and starting back for more, with the full intention, as they said, of looking in again as they passed.

I confess that it required no small faith in the soundness of these doctrines to witness the departure of well-freighted cornships, when we ourselves were on the very edge of starvation. Many men trembled who never quaked before; and the period between the positive decision of the Government and the full operation of this trial of the free trade principle was one of intense anxiety, even to those who felt surest of their ground.

It is fortunate for a country when such men as Mr. Warden are in high places at moments when great dangers press on the state, and mere routines and etiquettes will no longer carry round in safety the machine of public affairs. It is then that the vigour of an intrepid thinker makes itself irresistibly felt, and reclaims that ascendency over ordinary minds which, in seasons of national repose and security, the mass of a people are too apt to disregard.

It is only necessary to add, on this branch of the subject, that as Bombay, during the whole of the season which followed, was filled with grain, it became literally, as had been anticipated, the granary of all that quarter of India. It is very seldom, I suppose, that measures of public economy can be made to square so happily with the practice of the passing hour; and on this account I have given the details somewhat at length, but exactly as they arose.

The effects of the famine which was desolating the neighbouring districts soon made themselves visible at Bombay, by a very curious and painful sort of reflected, or

rather what the opticians would call transmitted, light. We were living on that island in the midst of peace and plenty, while the territories north of us had become a prey to absolute want and the fiercest tumults, accompanied by bloodshed in every variety of shape. As each day broke, the wharfs and roads of our happy spot were lined with crowds of wretched, half-starved objects, who had with difficulty made their escape from the accumulated horrors of their own desolated homes. The whole of the eastern, or land side of Bombay, was strewed over with the dead and dying natives. I never saw misery on such an extensive scale, either before or since, except, perhaps, in some of the wretched villages of Spain, when the French dragoons had taught the poor inhabitants, at the edge of the sabre, to understand what the evils of war really are when brought close to their own altars and fire-sides.

What an important service might not that man render to England, who should make the people at large duly aware of the unspeakable advantages they have

so long enjoyed in being exempted from the dreadful miseries of actual war, and its ghastly followers, pestilence and famine! How useful, and how grateful, but, alas, how hopeless, the task of convincing the great mass of the present and future generations of this country, that almost all the sacrifices we have made in our own time, and are still making, as well as the share which our posterity will be called upon to contribute in theirs, are admirably bestowed in securing the matchless blessings we enjoy, and future ages of our descendants may continue to enjoy, far above all other nations.

I only wish that those people amongst us who doubt the efficacy of our establishments in church and state in preserving the national strength, and in maintaining the purity of virtuous practice, could see with their own eyes the effects of the absence of such institutions, and thus judge for themselves of their influence on human happiness. I think there might readily be pointed out, to the satisfaction of any reasonable advocate for speculative reform, scenes and circumstances in many coun-

tries whose boast, for example, it is to have no national debt, which would prove, that in consideration of the annual payment of this comparatively trifling rental, as it may well be called, not only we, but all our posterity, are secured in the enjoyment of national and domestic blessings such as no other country on earth is even in a slight degree acquainted with.

The most striking, and, perhaps, I may add, most affecting circumstance connected with this glimpse we had of the famine, was the marvellous patience, or what, in other lands, we should have called Christian resignation, of the unfortunate sufferers. I mixed amongst the natives constantly, and saw them exposed to every shade of distress, but never heard a complaint, nor saw a gesture of impatience. And what was still more extraordinary, immense groups of persons actually dying of hunger would sit round the fire on which the rice provided for them had been cooked, and there wait, with perfect composure, while the several messes were measured out and distributed to them; a process that often lasted more

than an hour, during which their food lay within two or three feet of them, and quite within their grasp. It was curious to observe, also, during the whole period of this famine, that in several of the squares and other open spaces in the town, immense piles of rice were left exposed, night and day, for weeks together, without any guards, yet not a single bag was ever cut open.

I ought to have mentioned, that subscriptions to a considerable amount were made for the support of the starving multitude. And what was particularly interesting, the wealthy natives, the Banyans and Parsees, in particular, opened a subscription amongst themselves, and purchased many thousands of bags of rice for the strangers, some weeks, or, at all events, a good many days, before the English residents came forward. This, however, was partly accidental, and partly caused by the natives having a more intimate acquaintance with the pressing nature and the extent of the distress. The two parties soon combined their exertions, and the native and English committees

mutually assisted each other in this work of charity. Huge boilers were provided, under a picturesque tope, or grove, of cocoa-nut trees, about half a mile from the fort; and as a Hindoo, in general, will not eat a morsel of food, even to save his life, if it has been dressed by a person of a different caste, care was taken to provide cooks whose foreheads were marked with the proper streak of red or yellow paint, as the case might require. I myself repeatedly saw natives actually expiring of hunger, who refused the food presented to them, because a doubt existed as to the hands through which it had passed.

Exceptions did occur sometimes to the strictness of this rule, as I shall have occasion to state in describing the horrors of the countries where not merely scarcity and extensive illness prevailed, but where famine and pestilence swept away whole tribes. In those wretched districts immense masses of people were reduced to absolute starvation, and every thing like laws or customs, old prejudices or old manners, appears to have been disregarded. Under such dreadful circum-

stances, the vehemence of hunger, and the excitement of despair, drove bodies of men into the commission of enormities which, in ordinary times, they would rather have died than have perpetrated singly.

I remember a story which made a great stir at Bombay; and though involving something ludicrous along with much that is dreadful, it is too essentially characteristic to be omitted.

Eleven natives, belonging to one of the strictest of all the castes of Hindoos, were travelling from Cutch, through Guzerat, to Bombay. They had been driven out of their own country by the famine, and were flying to the south, in hopes of reaching territories not yet desolated. By the time they passed through the village of Bhownagur, the majority of the party were almost dead with hunger, sickness, and fatigue. On the outskirts of the town they fell in with a cow, when, instigated by the irresistible cravings of hunger, and reduced to the last stage of existence, they slaughtered the animal, and eagerly devoured the raw flesh. This pro-

ceeding will convey nothing very extraordinary or flagitious to European ears; but when it is recollected that over the whole of Hindustan the cow is held sacred, it will easily be conceived that killing and eating one of that species was an offence of the blackest die. To taste beef in any shape, or under any circumstances, is likewise an unspeakable abomination in the eyes of the Hindoos; so that the guilt of these famishing wretches was considered of a double degree of atrocity.

No punishment short of death, it seems, could expiate such complicated enormity. Had they murdered one or two of their own party to assuage their hunger withal, possibly no particular notice would have been taken of the circumstance, considering the dreadful state to which they were reduced. But the deadly offence of killing a cow, an animal all but worshipped, was not to be forgiven! The Thakore, or chief of the village, therefore, immediately directed the whole of these eleven human beings to be executed on the spot!

All this might, perhaps, have passed off quietly, had not a curious question

of local authority arisen between this orthodox native ruler and the British powers. As chief of an adjoining province, the Thakore was what is called (at the expense of a slight diplomatic contradiction in terms) an independent tributary; but being also a landholder under the British, it was thought by some that he might in that capacity have been held amenable to their jurisdiction. Bhownagur, it appears, was situated within the British sovereignty, and the chief was certainly guilty of an offence punishable by its laws. As the Government, however, fortunately for this over-zealous functionary's neck, had not yet distinctly marked the line of his allegiance as a landholder, no notice could be taken of this arbitrary act beyond a strong remonstrance on the subject, with an explicit warning against its repetition within the British territories. A regulation was also passed, declaring Mr. Thakore, in spite of his independence, fully amenable in future to the jurisdiction of our courts of law, as a landholder within our territories.

In the meantime, as the evils of the

famine advanced, the governor in council at Bombay, with the wonted vigour and promptitude of East India Company's administration, not only assisted, by grants of money, the subscriptions raised to subsist the famishing natives who flocked to the presidency, but contributed another description of help which was very much wanted — I mean that of medicine and medical attendance. As pestilence invariably follows, if it does not accompany famine, several great sheds, each, I think, a hundred yards long, were erected as hospitals on the smooth greensward lying just beyond the foot of the glacis, and reaching nearly across the esplanade or clear space in front of the northern line of the fortifications. Numerous surgeons, some military, and some belonging to the civil establishment, were called in from various out-stations, and placed in charge of these and other infirmaries, which were soon filled; for it was made a rule to reject no one requiring medical aid. I often accompanied the gentlemen connected with these hospitals, and never went the melancholy round without seeing instances

well calculated to excite interest in the Hindoo character. I shall never forget the touching effect produced by our encountering one day a pretty little girl, between five and six years old, who seemed quite adrift. We asked where her father was—she pointed to a crib on which her parent lay dead; and when questioned about her mother, she made a similar sign towards another figure, also dead! She had come, she believed, from the northern country, but whence she knew not exactly, neither could she tell her own name; nor had she, apparently, any other relations besides these two, who, it seems, had expired about an hour before.

I took such a feverish interest in the whole of this painful drama, too forcibly real, indeed, but still highly exciting, that I used to ride out early every morning, to watch the awful and picturesque scene which the opening day was always sure to expose to view. Along the road-side, particularly in the districts near the ferries, there lay scattered about many bodies of persons, of all ages, who had sunk during the night; others we found

just dying; and it happened not infrequently that we fell in with children, who, like the poor little girl in the hospital, having survived the whole of their kindred, were toddling about all unconscious of their desolate condition. At first sight it seemed strange, that the youngest and weakest of the family should be the last to perish; but the reason probably was, that the parents may have deprived themselves of sustenance, in order to support these helpless things. This, I imagine, would happen in any country; but amongst a people, almost every act of whose lives is marked by self-denial, it seemed to follow as a matter of course. It was very consolatory to observe that these orphans were never left to wander about or to perish from want of care, but were always taken charge of by some of the natives of the caste to which the parents had belonged.

In the same way we observed that the bodies of those who had died of hunger, or disease, or fatigue, during the night, were carried away by the members of the same tribe; although, in most instances,

there could have been no personal acquaintance between the parties, nor, indeed, any other means of ascertaining the caste to which they had belonged, than those painted marks on the forehead already alluded to.

These scattered bodies, as well as those of persons who died in the hospitals, or who expired from sickness or exhaustion, under the care of the natives, on different parts of the island, being straightway carried off to the beach of Back Bay, were there burned, according to the immemorial custom of the country. I am not quite sure, but I think all the different castes of Hindoos burn their dead; and although this method of disposing of the body after death is, on many accounts, repugnant to our notions of such things, it must be confessed that the ceremony itself includes much that is highly impressive, and not a little that is classical in its associations.

Few people know, probably, how soon and how readily a dead body may be consumed; and still fewer, I suspect, are aware that there remain at last, of all

this goodly frame, but a few ounces of white ashes.

"Expende Hannibalem: quot libras in duce summo Invenies?"

All the rest is sublimed, or carried off, in the shape of vapour, into the atmosphere, again to be returned in due season to the parent earth, to assist in the various processes of vegetative and animal life.

Although, of course, there was much to distress the feelings, and occasionally something to shock them, at the spot selected by the natives to perform these last melancholy rites to their departed countrymen, after the picturesque custom of their forefathers, I could not resist the temptation of going frequently to witness their proceedings. Never shall I lose the recollection of these visits, nor the wild sort of interest with which I passed along the shore, amongst these innumerable funeral piles, and seldom failed to discover a multitude of new and curious objects all crowded into one spot. I generally went alone; for few, if any, of the English gentlemen with whom I

was acquainted could comprehend what possible delight any one could take in seeing a number of black fellows burned. One friend in particular, who, from his vehement curiosity in respect to every thing else relating to the natives, I had reckoned upon for companionship and sympathy in these rambles, always failed me as we approached the bend of the coast round the turn of which the fires were blazing. He lived in a delightful house, in the woods, half way up the side of Malabar Hill, just beyond the Bay, and his course led him naturally near the shore; but, in spite of all I could do, he always turned his horse's head inland at the separation of the roads, and made a circuit of a mile to avoid these scenes which excited me to such a pitch, that I could never resist their fascination.

Back Bay is formed by two projecting headlands; one, which is called Malabar Point, being high and thickly wooded; the other, called Colaba, is low, and broken into pretty islets, well known to seamen by the few but conspicuous

trees which distinguish them from the main land, and still more by the splendid lighthouse near the southern extremity of this low and partially wooded spit. The shore, which, between the two points, takes a semicircular sweep, is fringed by a flat beach of sand, immediately in front of a dense belt of cocoa-nuts. The trees in this grove stand so unusually close, that they afford shade to numerous straggling huts of the natives, which are so low as scarcely to be seen amongst the rich foliage of the underwood of plantains, limes, and figs. These, however beautiful in themselves, pretend to no rivalry in stature with the lordly cocoa, the most graceful, and, after all, perhaps the most truly characteristic member of the Eastern forest. It is quite a mistake to imagine its stem a mere tall, straight pole, or to suppose that a grove of these singular trees resembles an overgrown fir-plantation, or the tiresome pine-barrens of America. I scarcely, indeed, remember to have seen one that was quite straight, or even exactly upright, or by any means uniform in size, from the ground to the magnifi-

cent cluster of leaves spreading out at top. Every one must be familiar with the appearance of this tree who has seen the drawings of those incomparable artists the Daniells, or of Baillie Fraser of the Himala mountains — draughtsmen of a kindred spirit, and possessed, in their respective walks, of a truly noble feeling for oriental scenery.

The stem of the cocoa-nut tree, it will be observed, generally starts from the ground with a thickness calculated apparently to give it a great degree of strength just at the point where, from the length of the lever above, it might most naturally be broken over. But this swell rapidly melts away into the more slender stem, or stalk, as it may almost be termed, which is often a little inclined to one side at first. It then becomes more upright, or bends again the other way, but always gently and gracefully. Towards the very top, before it reaches the great cluster of fruit lying under the leaves, the stem in general becomes larger, after which it is lost in the shade of the ever-splendid top. I hardly

know if we ought in strictness to describe the upper part as composed of branches or of leaves; though it is more usual, I think, to speak of the long curving arms, which extend on all sides, as leaves. These, which vary in length from ten to twenty feet, closely resemble an ostrich feather in structure, being composed of a smooth, strong, gradually tapering centre-piece, with subordinate leaves three or four feet in length growing from it on each side, and tapering in their form to the end, which is a sharp point. These lateral or small leaves become shorter and shorter towards the end of the branch. In the middle of all at top, the young leaves may often be seen sprouting up, green and vigorous, and all ready to bend over to the right and left in their turn. Occasionally a good deal of what a sketcher loves to call spirit is given to the picture by the forlorn condition of a branch, which has either been broken by the wind, or injured by some accidental cut of the Tari or toddy gatherer's knife. Such a branch, of course, speedily withers, and hangs down its head in perpendicular

lines, singularly contrasted in colour and in form with the living foliage and graceful curves forming the rest of this magnificent bunch of court plumes.

Although the funeral piles of the poor Hindoos possess none of the splendour with which the classical imagination delights to paint such things, they are sufficiently interesting, and might furnish many hints for such an artist as Turner, whose grand picture of Rizpah watching the dead bodies, has often recalled to my thoughts the scenes of this famine. For many an hour I have stood looking at the groups of natives as they emerged from the grove, bearing along the remains of a friend, or of some unknown countryman of their particular caste, found dead by the roadside, or who had expired in the hospital. While some of the party employed themselves in washing the body in the sea, others erected an oblong pile, between one and two feet high, and five or six long, out of short blocks or billets of firewood, on which the famine-stricken form being laid, it was covered over with a few additional pieces of fuel. I have no

distinct recollection of any ceremonies or religious rites being performed by the Hindoos upon this occasion. As soon as the fire was kindled, the natives squatted on the sand, close to the pile, on the windward side, and they generally preserved the most perfect silence. I never observed in any of their countenances the slightest appearance of what we should call emotion; indeed, the most characteristic point I recollect about the Hindoos is tranquillity under every degree of suffering. On watching with attention the progress of the flames, I remarked that, after a time, the unctuous parts even of the most wasted of these bodies, as they dropped down piecemeal, assisted materially in their own conflagration. Whenever, by the action of the flames, the several limbs fell asunder, the parts were carefully replaced on the fire by the attendants, with a wonderful degree of indifference or of composure; I hardly know which to call it. I have frequently threaded my way amongst a hundred of these funeral piles blazing away at once, each attended by a party of the natives consisting of four

or five men, but without hearing a single word spoken.

In ordinary times the deaths in Bombay may be taken at 17 daily, or 1 for every 9687 persons, making the annual mortality about 6205, or 1 for every 26½ inhabitants. During the famine, the additional deaths in Bombay exceeded 15 a-day, the whole mortality then varying between 30 and 40 daily. Sometimes the numbers amounted to three or four times as many, when accidental circumstances augmented the arrivals from the famine countries.

The periods of the day when I visited this strange scene were either in the morning, when the damp land-wind was just dying away into a calm, or in the afternoon, when the delicious sea-breeze still blew freshly home to the bottom of the bight, waving the plumes of the cocoa-nuts in fine style. In the morning the bay, not only within the two points, but quite out to the horizon, remained as smooth as a sheet of glass, without even a ripple large enough to break audibly on the sand; and as no swell rolled in from the offing, the sea, at such moments,

lay so perfectly still, that all the surrounding objects on the shore, as well as those resting on the surface of the water, became reflected with a degree of sharpness in every respect like the originals.

The funeral piles being placed just within the margin of the beach, at the very water's edge, and fringing the shore, there rose up, in the most striking manner, nearly at equal intervals, a hundred pillars of smoke, as it were guarding the coast; or like tall columns stretching their heads into the air, many times higher than the highest trees of the dark, thickly planted tope, or grove, further inland, not a single leaf of which seemed now in motion.

What added something of a mysterious and unearthly character to this solemn scene, was its perfect silence. Scarcely a sound could be heard along the whole shore, though within the space of a mile many hundreds of persons might be seen flitting about. Had it not been for the frequent splash, as another and another dead body was dipped in the sea, or a low word or two escaping from the natives

as they arranged the pile on which the corpse was to be consumed, or the crackling of some fire fanned into more brisk action than the rest by a casual flaw of wind whisking in from the bay, the whole might have passed for a ghost-like vision. As I moved up and down the melancholy beach, I passed apparently as totally unnoticed by the natives as if I had been invisible. On every side I could see indistinctly through the smoke and flames, heads, and arms, and half-destroyed bodies, falling down and mingling in a confused heap with the blazing faggots, each pile being surrounded and kept in order by a group of silent, ghastly, hunger-worn Hindoos. It became difficult at times not to fancy the whole scene a mere delusion of the senses!

Adjacent to this fearful spectacle, I remarked a small, but striking circumstance, which, without dissipating these dreamy kind of fancies, brought forcibly to my mind the extent of the calamity by which that part of India was then so dreadfully scourged. In ordinary times, when the average number of deaths at Bombay

is seldom so great as twenty a-day, the current supply of fire-wood in the bazaar is sufficient for all the funeral piles of the natives. But when the terrible famine of 1812 extended its ravages over Marwar, Cutch, and Guzerat, and other states lying to the northward, and the crowds of half-starved miserable Hindoos rushed to the presidency, many of them only to die, the demand for fire-wood was so great, that it became a profitable speculation to import fuel from a distance in this express view. There might always be seen, accordingly, a long line of coasting vessels, at a few hundred yards from the beach of Back Bay, anchored abreast of the fires, which never ceased to blaze night or day. These boats were loaded half-mast high with faggots and billets of timber, cut to the proper length and well dried for the occasion.

# CHAPTER III.

## THE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS.

WHAT we saw of the remote effects of the great famine which desolated the north-western parts of India, we had good reason to fear gave scarcely any idea of the dreadful misery which pervaded the actual scene of the calamity. For whatever may happen elsewhere, plenty and prosperity of every kind hold their permanent head-quarters at the British presidencies, as Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, the three seats of Government, are called. Although we certainly witnessed distress enough to give a high and painful interest to the passing events, the suffering we beheld must have formed only a petty episode in the great tragedy. So little, indeed, were the effects of the famine considered of engrossing importance at Bombay, that the ordinary amusements and occupations of the natives, as well as those

of strangers, went on just as if neither famine nor pestilence had been known in the neighbouring states. Crowds of dying wretches, who poured into the island daily from the province of Kattiwar and elsewhere, were soon lost sight of in the rich and benevolent population of Bombay. I really believe, that if their numbers had been ten times greater, the vast resources of that wonderful little spot, which hardly occupies the breadth of a pin's head on the map of India, would still have outstretched the occasion.

But in Guzerat itself, the unhappy region of the actual famine, the case appears to have been very different. There the persons almost in absolute want of food formed a large majority of the population, in a country destitute of the means of procuring subsistence, and not, as at Bombay, a small minority in a district abounding with resources. It may well be supposed, also, that the scenes which occurred in those devoted countries partook but little, if at all, of the picturesque though melancholy interest which engaged our attention so deeply at a distance. I

remember, upon one occasion, expressing in rather strong terms the excitement, and almost the gratification I had experienced on witnessing some occurrence connected with a party of more than half-famished natives, who had just arrived after many days' march, during which their numbers had been reduced from several hundreds to a few dozens. A gentleman, who had been living in the countries from whence these people were recently driven out by sheer famine, shook his head, and remarked, that if I had only seen for one hour the horrors which he had been compelled to witness for weeks and months together, I would do every thing I could to drive their recollection from my mind, instead of courting fresh sights as a source of picturesque curiosity.

From this gentleman and others I learned various particulars of the famine, which certainly altered the character of the interest I had felt at first in the events passing under our own eyes at Bombay. We are apt, perhaps, to hear of such things without receiving much of the instruction which assuredly they are intended to

convey; and I am tempted to repeat, that if we merely read of wars and famines, but all the while live in peace and plenty, we necessarily gain a very imperfect conception of the blessings we enjoy. If there could only be described, however, in adequate terms, a few of the miseries actually witnessed by travellers in different parts of the world, arising obviously out of the absence of those very circumstances which the home-croakers amongst us consider as evils, and so recklessly wish removed, not a few persons might be reconciled 'rather to bear those ills they have, than fly to others that they know not of!' This, however, is perhaps a vain attempt; since it may be observed, that the authority of an eye-witness of distant scenes of misery, whether they spring from misgovernment, from the accidents of the climate, or from any other cause, seldom goes for more than the mere passing interest of his story, while ninety-nine in every hundred of his hearers adopt the good old school-boy rule, 'and skip the moral.'

Most people in England know nothing of locusts except what they read of them in

Scripture; and even in India their habits are not generally understood. I remember meeting a gentleman who told me, that, during fifteen years' residence in the East, he had only seen locusts three times; once on the wing, and twice dressed in a curry. For my part, I never saw them at all, except in a museum; but I have conversed with persons who have seen them in all their mischievous glory. Their flights are described as resembling a heavy snow-storm, only black, and sending forth a rustling noise from millions of billions of wings, and sweeping along like a deluge in the air for three times twenty-four hours together.

Captain Beaufort, whose interesting and delightful book on Caramania every reader of travels is familiar with, told me that, when he lay at Smyrna, in 1811, he had an opportunity of forming a rude estimate of the magnitude of a flight of locusts which was drifting past from south to north. The consul had occasion to send a messenger in a due easterly direction to the Bashaw of Sardis, in Asia Minor, that is, in a course at right angles to the

flight of locusts. This person rode forty miles before he got clear of the moving column of these ravenous animals. It was inferred, from observations made with a pocket telescope, that the height of the column could not be less than three hundred yards, and the rate at which it passed not slower than seven miles an hour. This continued for three days and nights, apparently without intermission! As these insects succeeded one another at an average distance of not more than three feet, and were about one foot apart above one another, it was computed that the lowest number of locusts in this enormous swarm must have exceeded 168,608,563,200,000.

The mind, however, is strained to no purpose in trying to conceive such vast sums; it is like trying to judge of the distance of the fixed stars or the velocity of the sun's rays. When we are told that light moves over a space of 192,000 miles in a second, we are quite bewildered: but if we learn that in the same interval it would pass round the earth eight times, we have something to rest upon not altogether beyond the reach of our thoughts.

In the same way, in order to assist the imagination, Captain Beaufort determined, that the locusts he saw, if formed into a heap, would have exceeded in magnitude more than a thousand and thirty times the largest pyramid of Egypt; or, if they had been placed on the ground close together in a band of a mile and an eighth in width, it would have encircled the globe!*

My acquaintance with Cocker having become a little rusty, I found myself at a loss to state the above huge sum in words; but, in order to avoid mistakes, I wrote to one of the most distinguished astronomers and computers of this country, to beg he would enlighten my ignorance. His answer is as follows:—

"There is some difference between the French and English in their notation of millions.

"We class our numbers into periods of six, ascending in the order of thousands, millions, billions, trillions, &c.

* For some further details respecting this extraordinary flight of locusts, see an excellent little work called "Bertha's Visit to her Uncle in England," page 318.

Thus, your 15 figures would be

Billions. Millions. Thousands.

168,608563,200000.

"The French class their numbers by periods of three, ascending in the order of hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, &c. So that the same 15 figures would be called by them

Trillions. Billions. Millions. Thous. Hundreds.

168,608,563,200,000."

As we have been dabbling with billions and millions, I may take occasion to mention, that the prodigious sum above written is only about a fourth part as great as that which the undulations of light have been demonstrated to make in one second of time; viz. 600,000,000,000,000!*

There is some reason for supposing it not impossible that this was merely the tail of the flight, the desolating effect of whose march, in countries lying much further to the eastward than the Holy Land, I am now about to describe.

Myriads of these destructive insects appeared in the eastern provinces of Bengal

* Herschel's Treatise on Light.

about the beginning of 1810, from whence they took a north-westerly course across what is properly called Hindustan, including the upper provinces of India, but not the peninsula geographically so termed. In 1811 they first attacked the great district of Marwar, and then coasted along the edge of the western deserts of India. It so chanced that the annual fall of rain either failed entirely, or was so scanty in that year, that the locusts found it easy work to strip the country of every blade of vegetation. As soon as this was accomplished, they proceeded in a body to the north-west district of Guzerat, named Puttun, and from thence scoured the province of Kattiwar. On one occasion only they made their way as far south as the city of Baroach, on the right or northern bank of the river Nerbudda, a mighty stream which empties itself into the gulf of Cambay, a degree and a half south of the tropic, and about three degrees of latitude, or sixty leagues north of Bombay. Beyond this point the locusts were not known to extend in a southerly direction; and by the commencement of the

monsoon of 1812 this dreadful plague vanished from the face of that wretched country; but whence it came, or where it proceeded to, is not known; though, as I have hinted above, it may possibly have been no more than a detachment from this very flight which Capt. Beaufort saw at Smyrna.

The destruction in Guzerat effected by these insects was almost universal. In the latter part of 1811 the whole of the western part of the province was covered, to every appearance, with rich cultivation, though, when the crops were examined, the grain was found to be gone, and merely the stalks left, as if these had been unworthy of notice. Then came the failure of rain already alluded to in Marwar; when the drought co-operating with these abominable locusts, drove the unfortunate inhabitants of that country, in a huge living wave, tumultuously into the Guzerat territory. At first the condition of the wretched outcast Marwarees was rather improved by this change; but misery soon followed their untoward steps; for in 1812 Guzerat also experienced a failure of rain,

which well nigh demolished the crops in those districts which the locusts had not visited. The demands upon the resources of the country were thus doubled, when the means of supply were reduced to one-tenth part of their average amount; and in many places there was literally no crop at all.

A very graphic account of this famine is given by Captain Carnac, in the Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay, vol. I. article XIX.; to which I must refer for many interesting particulars. He describes the result in strong and distinct language. "The enhanced price of grain added to the apprehensions of the inhabitants, which impelled them to store their individual resources in times of such danger; and the villanies practised by the higher classes, to derive pecuniary advantage from the pressing wants of the people, soon reduced the half-famished emigrants to the greatest privations. The endurance of hunger was supported, however, by the Marwaree people with unaccountable pertinacity, which in some degree blunted the natural

feelings of sympathy in their lot. Whether the ready assistance rendered to these people, on their first entrance into Guzerat, had induced them to imagine, that under no circumstances would the hand of charity be withdrawn; or whether it was from the innate indolence of their character, or the infatuation which often accompanies the extremes of misfortune, that they rejected the certain means of subsistence by labour, it is notorious, that when the benevolent tendered employment to these people, it was uniformly declined, even with the certainty of death being the consequence of the refusal."

The account which all writers agree in giving of the scenes which speedily followed is almost too horrible to be repeated. Multitudes of the Marwar people, who, after suffering severely from famine in their own country, had wandered into Guzerat, were seen crowded, like cattle, in droves, beyond the suburbs of all the great towns, or by the road-sides, the dead and the dying together, men, women, and children, packed, as it were, in one mass, perishing of hunger, and almost all of them

suffering under acute diseases, brought on by fatigue and want. Of these the confluent small-pox was the most general, and committed incalculable ravages, not only amongst these starving multitudes, but amongst the people into whose territories they were urged by the pressure of despair.

There was one little picture in the narrative of this dreadful scene which always struck me as being peculiarly touching; I mean the unavailing struggles of the infants to draw sustenance from the exhausted breasts of their starving mothers! As a pendant to this, Captain Carnac describes another afflicting, but, upon the whole, less painful incident, which he likewise witnessed in person. A poor woman lay stretched by the side of a heartless group of her countrymen of the Marwar land, who would not spare her one drop of water, though she was herself dying, and her dead infant reposed on her breast!

The hourly recurrence of such accumulated miseries familiarised the minds of these poor people, as well as the natives

in general, to every extremity of suffering which human nature could bear. "In a short time," adds Captain Carnac, "those emanations of individual feeling among themselves, which distinguished the first commencement of their sufferings, gradually abated, and the utmost indifference universally predominated." We are naturally disposed to feel more for the children than for the grown-up persons on these occasions; but in one of the dreadful group of anecdotes related by Captain Carnac, we hardly know which to sympathise most with, the parent or the infant. "I saw a child," he tells us, "not quite dead, torn away by a pack of dogs from its mother, who, unable to speak or move, lay with anxious eyes directed to the object of her fond affection. It was pursued by its former little playmates, who had shared in its extreme adversity; but the ravenous animals (which had acquired an extraordinary degree of ferocity from having fed on human bodies) turned upon these innocents, and displayed their mouths and teeth discoloured with the blood of the child. A rescue was, of

course, attempted by ourselves; but the remains of life had been destroyed."

It is exceedingly curious that those feelings and prejudices which the Hindoos, in a state of ease and affluence, would assuredly not have resigned but with their lives, appear to have lost their power when the natives fell under the pressure of extreme and protracted distress. I must quote Captain Carnac's own words for what followed this relinquishment of their national and almost proverbial fortitude. This testimony on a point of some importance in national manners, is particularly valuable, from its being given as the result of actual observation.

"Distinctions of caste were preserved," he says, "until the moment when the hand of adversity bore heavy; then the Bramin sold his wife, his child, sister and connexions, for the trifle of two or three rupees, to such as would receive them!"

The number of the wretched Marwarees who died at Baroda alone was often five hundred in one day; but what is interesting on many accounts is, that in spite

of the reduced means of the opulent natives of Guzerat, they subscribed their money freely to assist their countrymen as well as these wretched strangers. The native governments in those provinces also subscribed very large sums of money for the relief of the famishing multitude. I have mentioned, that at Bombay nothing could exceed the calmness or patience with which the crowds of half starved strangers waited till it came to their turn to be fed. But in the north, where the famine raged in earnest, and where, as I have before mentioned, the hungry part of the population were in a large majority, this forbearance disappeared.

"It was a cruel sight," says Captain Carnac, "to those possessed of sensibility, to witness the struggles when the doors were opened to apportion the victuals. Every sentiment of humanity appeared to have been absorbed by the crowds collected around; and it was no unusual thing to be informed, that such and such a number had fallen a sacrifice to their precipitate voracity: many, also, whose wants had been supplied, continued to

devour until the means intended for their relief, proved, in the end, their destruction in a few hours. Children were often crushed to death, when attending for their pittance of food, under the feet of their own parents.

"The establishment of which I have been speaking was imitated in most of the principal towns in Guzerat, and added a few months of life to a class of beings reserved for greater miseries: indeed, subsequent events would seem to shew that these people were marked for total annihilation, and that in their destruction the inhabitants of this country were to be deeply involved."

I have already had occasion to mention, that at Bombay the natives paid the utmost respect to the funeral rites, so to call them, of their deceased friends, and even of those who had no other claims upon them but such as were common to the caste to which they belonged. But all this attention to the dead appears to have vanished, along with every spark of sympathy for the dying, in Guzerat. The bodies of the poor Marwarees who had expired during the

famine were left unheeded on the spot where they had sunk; and this total apathy, Captain Carnac is of opinion, was the chief cause of the contagion experienced in 1812, and the consequent extensive mortality. At Baroda, the seat of government, there was still authority and civil discipline enough to insure either the burial or the burning of the dead, although the numbers who had perished daily amounted at one time to upwards of five hundred. At Ahmedabad, however, the mortality was so enormous that these precautions were impossible. No fewer than one hundred thousand persons died in this city alone, or nearly a half of the entire population. "The demand for wood to burn the dead called for the destruction of the houses; even this was barely sufficient for the performance of the rites required by the Hindoo faith; and the half-consumed bodies on the banks of the Saburmuttee evince at this hour (February 1815, or two years and a half afterwards) to what straits the Hindoos were reduced in fulfilling the last duties to their kindred."

It is also stated, that in the latter periods of the famine many females were engaged in removing the dead and committing them to the piles. In this there appears nothing extraordinary, however painful it be to European ears; but we learn incidentally, from the remark of the writer, how exceedingly repugnant such a practice must be to Indian habits, since he considers it worth while to mention it as a kind of climax to the intolerable miseries caused by the famine. The inference from this fact seems also to be, that women, under such circumstances, retain their strength and fortitude longer than men. It is mentioned, likewise, that in all parts of the country, with the exception of Ahmedabad, the Mahomedan population did not suffer so severely as the Hindoos, an advantage ascribed to their use of animal food; and yet at Kaira the Europeans suffered still more than either Mahometans or Hindoos. The melancholy fact, however, pervading all these terrible scenes appears to be, that during seasons of famine, pestilential diseases of every description are far more



Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

rife than at any other time, and that all the ordinary causes of mortality are then urged into tenfold action. The periodical insalubrity of the climate of Guzerat after the rainy season is well known, and cannot be counteracted; but, unfortunately, it would seem that it may readily be augmented. The deaths, accordingly, over the province at large, during the visitation above described, were as ten to one above the average!

It seems to have been impossible to draw any thing like a correct estimate of the destruction amongst the expatriated Marwarees; but some idea may be formed of the severity with which that unhappy country was scourged, when an impartial eye-witness, possessed of the best means of information, considers it probable that ninety-nine in every hundred perished! The following extract, which winds up the account of these fearful calamities, may serve to shew that we have not been describing the worst parts of the famine; for that in another province the destruction caused by the locusts was still greater than in Guzerat.

"The influx of a large proportion of the population of a country yielding an annual revenue of £500,000 cannot be accurately ascertained. The emigrants arrived in detached bodies, and, for the purpose of convenience, spread themselves over the face of Guzerat, from the borders of the gulf of Cutch to Surat, in many instances even flocking from ports on the coast to Bombay, which they were enabled to do in consequence of native chiefs and opulent merchants granting them passages free of charge. It should be observed, however, that the larger portion of people who resorted to the presidency (of Bombay) were from Kattiwar, which suffered from the want of rain, and the ravages of locusts, in a much greater degree than the province of Guzerat.

"It is also out of my power," adds Captain Carnac, "to give any certain account of the number of Marwarees who perished in the famine. I have seen in an evening's ride in the suburbs of this town of Baroda, in which every practicable means for saving them were benevolently exercised, not less than fifty bodies

scattered around, which the servants of Government had not time to inter. I would, therefore, from a review of all the circumstances related, be inclined to estimate, that not more than one in a hundred of these poor creatures ever returned to their native country."*

* Bombay Transactions, vol. i. p. 303.

# CHAPTER IV.

## INDIAN NOTCH. THROWING THE COCOA-NUT.

We hear the fatal truth, that "in the midst of life we are in death" repeated so often, and in such a variety of tones, that our ear becomes accustomed to the sound, without its arresting the attention. The warning accordingly produces but little effect upon our thoughts, and still less upon our conduct. Such being the case, it may often prove highly useful to seize upon such accidental circumstances as those described in the last Chapter, in order to turn them to account, as illustrations of maxims of which no one can be said actually to doubt the truth, but to which few attach much importance, or only such as goes, practically, for little or nothing.

By a strange kind of obliquity, how-

ever, in our moral vision, it would appear that the direct view of such instruction as we may find in the beautiful text above quoted, is not always the most efficacious. For example, it must be confessed (and, I suppose, we ought to own it with shame), that we may witness even the effects of a famine without many other feelings being excited than that of intense curiosity. At all events, I fear it never occurred to me at the time to extract any moral lesson out of the wholesale work which death was then making before my eyes, till an accident induced me to turn the picture round, and I then speculated to some purpose on the reverse view which presented itself to the imagination. One day, after having passed several hours amongst the starving, dying, and burning Hindoos, I returned home strangely interested with the work of destruction; and while repeating the verse quoted above, and cudgelling my brains to extract something solemn out of the text, in order to subdue the high flow of spirits into which the novelty of this scene had thrown me, a friend called, and carried me off with

him to a native dance, or notch, given by a well-known Persian nobleman, named Mohamed Ally Khan, then resident at Bombay. It is odd enough, that this brilliant spectacle, intended for the express purpose of driving away care, as it is called, should have caused at once the very feeling of melancholy which all the horrors of the morning had failed to excite.

On recently examining a set of long-forgotten memorandums and letters written at Bombay twenty years ago, during the progress of the scenes described in the preceding pages, I was more struck than I appear to have been when writing them, with the extraordinary mixture of incidents one would have supposed every way harrowing to the feelings, with gay ceremonies and amusements apparently quite incompatible with each other. I find stories of death by absolute hunger and pestilence jumbled up with dinner-parties — records of Hindoo burnings, with descriptions of evening parties — feastings, and flirtations, side by side with hospital-practice, and questions on the corn-laws!

Then follow long pages of rapture about oriental scenery, strewed over with a wild sort of youthful curiosity about native manners, dresses, and other customs, all so much crowded before me at the same moment, and in one little spot on the earth's surface, that I appear scarcely to have known how to spread them out, or how to select them. Besides all which, I find that at the time when the feelings which those interesting objects excited, from their novelty and combination, were at their height, the power to do them any justice in expression was deplorably wanting. This sort of retrospective glance naturally makes a traveller often wish he could pass again through scenes of which he discovers he knew not the value till too late, but which he is always vain enough to fancy he could now describe much better.

My worthy friend Mahomed Ally could not speak one word of English, nor I a word of Persian; nevertheless we got on mighty well, chiefly by the aid of a smoking apparatus called a killian, which hardly differs from the well-known hookah,

with eternal accounts of which old Indians are so apt to weary Europeans. The secret of the sedative or complacent power of this charming variety of the pipe lies, I suspect, fully as much in the guggle-guggle-guggling noise made by the smoke in passing through the water, as in the celestial sort of semi-intoxication produced by the fumes of the tobacco and other fragrant herbs of which the glorious 'chillums' of the East are composed. Of course, all ladies abuse the use of tobacco, though, perhaps, only because they dare not indulge in it themselves. Indeed, when we look at the tranquil ecstasy, and complete self-satisfaction, of an Irish female porter in Covent Garden market, with a pipe, as black as her hand, one inch in length, clinging to the corner of her mouth, can we venture to assert, that any rank, station, or wealth in the community, boasts of a commensurate degree of luxury?

Wine, and other generous fluids, right joyous though they be in their incipient effects, generally exact such a swinging compound interest for their advances, in

the shape of headachs and heartachs, duels, dyspepsias, and the devil hardly knows what besides, that I question if there is any man come to that period of life lying a little beyond the season wofully miscalled the 'years of discretion,' who looks back with unmixed satisfaction to his wine-bibbing days. But it is quite another affair with the 'virtuous tobacco.' I feel so distinctly upon this point, that I could almost set down in regular order every pipe, hookah, killian, and cigar, I have whiffed since I first went to sea, and all without one pinch of remorse. Who, I wonder, could make a similar pangless enumeration of the cups he has quaffed? Through the charming vapour which rises before the half-shut eyes of my imagination, when recalling past scenes of smoking, I can rediscover hundreds upon hundreds of tranquil hours of as complete happiness as the nature of our clay is capable of enjoying. Athwart the curling mists of past pipes I see again friends long since parted and gone either to other lands, or to another world, but still present to those early thoughts as

freshly as ever. In the rising tobacco clouds I may also see reflected to memory's eye groups of turbaned heads, endless towering pagodas, rich groves of cocoa-nut trees, and the tall minarets of foreign climes and false religions, all bright as when I first gazed upon them! I hear once again the deep half-throttled guttural voice of the Arab, the mellow richness of the Malay dialect (that Italian of the East), or listen in fancy to the sharp scolding note of the merry Chinese. The aromatic perfume of the Havannah cigars, so well named by the Dons 'puros,' I can almost recall to my senses now by the mere remembrance of its delicious fragrance; and as my fancy puffs away, I imagine myself still exchanging courtesies with the stately Spaniards, who certainly are amongst the pleasantest of men, whether we hold converse with them in the streets of Corunna, in the red-hot quadras of Lima the silver-gated city of the kings, or, farther off still, in the famous port of Acapulco, so redolent, in every sailor's memory, of 'Oro y Plata,' and in visions of those charming Manilla galleons,

never, never again to be our prizes! I say nothing of the innumerable jollifications and happy merry-meetings amongst our own countrymen and messmates with which the retrospect of every true blue voyager or traveller must be filled, or, I may say, hallowed, in union with the smoke of tobacco, in every latitude and longitude of this excellent round world of ours, which, the more I see and learn to appreciate, the more and more I continue to delight in.

It is the easiest thing possible to deride and abuse those indulgences which we either do not relish, or cannot command, or which are unsuitable to our station, sex, or circumstances, or, finally, which we can no longer partake of. When, therefore, we observe people turning up their noses at the approach of a row of happy bricklaying Pats, with a volcano at the corner of their respective dusty countenances, or hear some worn-out moralist expressing great horror at a yacht-club dandy with a cigar in his cheek, we feel an involuntary assurance that these fastidious objectors are then making a private bargain

with their own selfishness, or compounding with their delicate consciences

—— "for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to."

Smoking, like tippling, "or any other sort of exercise," as poor Beppo says, may be carried so far as to convert the indulger into a mere chafing-dish. In the midshipmen's birth, (that fountain-head of strong terms and apt similes,) such determined smokers are compared to those formidable combustibles used in fire-ships, called 'Beelzebubs,' of which the chief ingredients are brimstone and gunpowder. But if tobacco-smoke be only used in due moderation, and in a gentlemanlike spirit, it may lighten many a weary hour of toil and pain, illuminate the fancy of literature, unravel the intricacies of science, subdue the exacerbations of passion, and help to brighten and mellow many a friendly meeting, which, but for its slight and transient exhilaration, might have passed coldly and drearily enough. I can even remember instances of meetings, from which every kindly feeling was expected

to be banished, turn out most cordially, merely from the well-timed distribution of a handful of first-rate cigars amongst men who knew their value, but hardly hoped to be so blessed as to possess such treasures. The vulgarity of a bribe, put into the shape of gold or silver, shocks all but the coarsest minds; while the well-managed offer of a trifle often conveys wishes, and excites interests, or even lays the foundations of substantial goodwill, more firmly than services infinitely higher could procure. From the rudest savages, accordingly, amongst the red men of the Arkansaw and Missouri, to the most polished Asiatic, the magical influence of tobacco-smoke is recognised. Indeed, I am half persuaded that the conferences and protocol meetings of our European diplomacy would get on much more smoothly if every congress were provided with a good store of pipes and pig-tail! As it is, are not the negotiators obliged to borrow the aid of this wonderful plant in another shape, and exchange snuff-boxes?

Be all this as it may, I had certainly no objection to my friend Mahomed Ally's

killian, when I found myself seated on his thickly-matted and trebly-carpeted floor at Bombay, in the days of my youth, before the poverty of my head and stomach (and not my will!) had compelled me to abandon smoke, and all other good things, save the Hindoo diet of rice and water. Chairs there were none; but to relieve the fatigue of sitting on the ground, there lay scattered about on the floor a profusion of hard, well-stuffed, and richly-covered pillows, of different sizes and shapes. The Chinese, I think, are the only nation in the East who use chairs, tables, and sofas, like those of Europe. I must say, however, that although it is amusing enough, for a time, to loll or roll about on the floor, in the midst of a pile of bolsters, it soon becomes very tiresome practice. The Persians generally kneel, and, with their feet close together, sit on their heels, so that the soles of their feet are turned nearly upwards. This posture is said to become, after a time, a very easy and convenient one, though Europeans find it intolerably painful at first, perhaps from the tightness of their dress, compared to

the looseness of that worn by Asiatics. I observed that all the company, except ourselves, left their shoes, or slippers, at the door, and I felt rather disappointed at not being obliged to conform to the customs of the country: this, however, our host would not allow us to think of; but he made no objection to our removing our hats, though he himself and his countrymen kept on their turbans.

After puffing away for a short while, we were presented with a little cup of coffee, holding about as much as would fill a couple of thimbles, but including the essence of two or three dishes of such diluted stuff as we drink in these degenerate longitudes. The coffee was as black as ink, and so rich in flavour, that it instantly filled the apartment with the most delicious aroma. It was potent, too, in another sense, and produced a slight degree of exhilaration in the spirits, just enough to set the fancy off in quest of similar meetings in the Arabian Nights. It required but little help to complete the picture, for every thing was strictly in character with those happily-described

scenes, which establish such a strong hold on our young imaginations, that the presence of the reality only brightens their lustre. Disappointment on this subject, there can hardly be much, in the mind of any man not the crustiest and least easily pleased of his species. The descriptions contained in those fairy tales may be compared to the landscapes of a good painter, not servile copies either of individual forms, or of the accidental tints of nature, but judiciously selected and harmonised groups, coloured in such a way as to remove all that is vulgar in mere reality, and yet to retain much of what is essentially picturesque; the result being better, and more true to general nature, or, at all events, more pleasing, than the detached scenes themselves.

The fantastic tales alluded to are extremely apt to assume, in our fancy, the place of the originals; while the realities, when we come actually to look at them, appear like pictures. I, at least, for my part, was so completely under the influence of this delusion, or poetical 'mirage,'

that I could scarcely manage, even to the last period of my stay in India, to put things in their proper places. I seldom took a walk in the bazaar, or visited a native's house, without thinking of some fairy tale from which the incidents appeared to have been expressly got up; and, in like manner, I hardly ever passed a Hindoo's hut, before which a swarthy turbaned inhabitant of the East was whirling round the potter's wheel, without having my thoughts carried back to some of those beautiful narrations of Scripture, which fasten themselves so early and so firmly on our minds.

I had once the good fortune, as I must ever consider it, to see a workman accidentally break the pot, which had cost him no small trouble to fashion. He immediately collected the fragments, dabbed the clay together again, and, with the industry of an ant, set about the reconstruction of his vessel. As the whole process recalled an illustration I remembered to have seen used somewhere in the Old Testament, I set about hunting for the passage, and was delighted to find what

I had just witnessed most graphically represented in the following text:

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there will I cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels; and the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.'"*

Mahomed Ally's party proved to be a 'Notch' or dance, where the company, unlike that of a European ball, took no share in the performance: instead of dancing, we were danced to; and, what is more, were sung to by one and the same person. The performer was a celebrated dancing-girl, well known in Western India, of great wealth and talents in the

* Jeremiah, xviii. 1—6.

line of her art, which was as different as can be conceived, in all respects, from that displayed at the ballets of our hemisphere. In the first place, this figurante was encumbered with huge piles of dress, so much stiffened by embroidery, formed of gold and silver threads crossing its texture, that the folds stuck out nearly at right angles from her waist, and hung so low down that even her ankles were entirely hid. The shoulders, likewise, and breast, being totally eclipsed by endless folds of cloth, wound round her in such quantities, the only wonder was how she contrived to move at all under the load. I forget in what taste her head-gear was arranged; but well remember that her nose was pierced like that of a sow, with an immense gold ring, and that her face and hair shone like a new dollar with cocoa-nut oil. Her feet were bare, and she wore no gloves on her hands, while both ankles and wrists were concealed beneath the multitude of rings or bangles by which they were encircled. I believe bells were attached to the good lady's legs; but this fact we could not ascer-

tain by actual observation, on account of the vast profusion of petticoats already described. At all events, the sound made by the short, quick stamping of this celebrated performer's feet, seemed louder than any bangles, or mere circles of gold and silver, might have been expected to produce.

Most of her dancing consisted of gesticulations with the hands and arms, accompanied by what we should call horrible contortions of the body, all of which were considered particularly fine by the admiring natives. The movement most frequently practised was executed with the hands waved, or rather twirled, round the wrists as sockets, as if all the articulations of the joints had been destroyed. A correspondent slow twisting and twining of the arms and legs, with a comical sort of wriggle of the whole body, and a sudden round turn now and then, completed the leading features of this least graceful of exhibitions. The sound of the bells, or whatever they were, attached to her legs, made us fancy at first that the damsel had concealed a timbrel or eastern

tambourine amongst the folds of her huge robe, and that she gave it thumps from time to time with her knee. Occasionally the singer squatted down on the floor, where she remained for several minutes singing, or rather screaming, at the full stretch of a shrill voice, and grinning with what she doubtless considered a very languishing and winning smile. As the recovery from this low position was not an easy affair, she generally contented herself with resting on one knee as a centre, round which the foot of the other leg described a circle, in a circumference of little stamping paces, in good time, to the squalling voices of a couple of pretty young girls, further aided by the accompaniment of two very harsh-sounding stringed instruments.

An hour or two of this monotonous work is rather tiresome to witness; and I suspect that even amongst the natives it serves the purpose merely of a running bass to their bald chat while smoking their pipes, and drinking their well-cooled sherbet. I afterwards attended many of these Hindoo notches; and al-

though there certainly appeared an occasional dancer, with a figure so graceful as to defy art to disguise it, and a simplicity of movement which no corruption of taste could altogether pervert, yet, upon the whole, it is difficult to conceive any thing less agreeable to European habits than these exhibitions. I think I may add as a general remark, that almost all dancing, except in countries where the intellect has been much cultivated, is not only ungraceful and tiresome, but generally disgusting, very often highly indecorous, and repugnant alike to good taste and good manners.

The chief interest of Oriental topics, accordingly, whether of living beings, or of inanimate nature, lies almost exclusively out of doors. The domestic economy of the natives differs so totally from ours in all those points which give what we call refinements and comforts, as well as dignity, to the private relations of society, that we are much more apt to be shocked by the indelicacies of their household matters than interested by their novelty. The consequence I believe is, that the English

residents in India see scarcely any thing of the domestic customs of the Hindoos. Here and there an inquisitive European may be found, whose strange fancy leads him to take delight in the habits of the East, and who, after years of inquiry and patient observation, attains a small degree of knowledge of the interior arrangements of the Hindoo families. But the reports of these gentlemen disinclined me very soon from following their example; and, after any little trials which I made, I always came back to the open air with a strong resolution never again to cross a native's threshold.

It was, therefore, with infinitely greater pleasure, that I mingled with the enormous crowd assembled on the day of full moon to witness the grand annual ceremony of throwing the cocoa-nut. The south-west monsoon blows nearly right on the western coast of India, from June to September inclusive. This is the season of rains, and of gales of wind which would be held very cheap by the hardy mariners of higher latitudes, though they are sufficient to interrupt the coasting trade

of the delicate Asiatics. The day of the full moon about the end of the monsoon is always held sacred by the Hindoos of that side of India, on account of its being near the period when the bad weather breaks up, and navigation and commerce revive. The gods of the winds and the sea are then supposed to be in the fittest humour to be propitiated; and, it must be allowed, that there is no small shew of taste, as well as splendour, in the ceremony itself, whatever may be the degree of its influence, as Jack says, with the "clerk of the weather office."

The whole population of the island (which, I suppose, means about one-tenth part of their numbers, or between twenty and thirty thousand) were assembled along the shore between Malabar Point and the Fort, in their best and whitest dresses, fluttering in the sea-breeze. The Brahmins, who, of course, took the lead, were collected on the beach in great crowds to officiate as priests; and the chief of the caste, having repaired to the edge of the sea, stood in the water along with his family in a circle, repeat-

ing a number of prayers, which were echoed by the other Brahmins. I could not learn what purpose the different parts of the ceremony were intended to answer, but could observe the chief of the Banyans fling fruits and flowers into the air, and occasionally scatter some on the surface of the water. Such of the flowers as the wind drove back to the beach, were eagerly caught up by the multitudes in attendance. After this, portions of the different articles held in highest estimation amongst them, as the production of industry, or the reward of commercial enterprise, were cast into the waves. These, we were told, consisted of rice, salt, and various spices, particularly cinnamon, from the island of Ceylon, which lies within a few days' sail of Bombay; nutmegs, betel-nut, and cloves, from Penang and the Moluccas. Last of all came the cocoa-nut, which was not thrown into the sea till the deities were supposed to have been soothed and flattered into the most perfect good humour by the operation of the previous complimentary proceedings.

Along the margin of the bay were collected many thousands of the natives, all anxiously waiting for the final ceremony; and it was curious to observe the eagerness with which they sought to possess a portion of the sacred nuts flung into the water by the Brahmins. At the end of the beach commences the green, or esplanade of the fort; a fine level plain, carpeted with a rich but short-bladed grass, enclosed by railings, and forming an area of half a mile square. Upon these grand occasions the esplanade presented a singular mixture of most of the different inhabitants of the earth, each wearing his own peculiar dress, speaking his own native language, following his own customs, and distinguished by many of those attendant circumstances by which he would have been accompanied at his proper home.

All sorts of European coaches, barouches, chariots, and gigs, were driving about, with every other kind of wheeled conveyance, from an artillery waggon to an engineer's wheel-barrow. Elephants bearing castles on their backs, paced about the ground, in company with camels, and

hundreds of small Arabian horses, just landed from ships arrived from the Red Sea and the gulf of Persia. Palankeens, of course, innumerable, might be seen traversing the field, across the path of native hackaries, and fifty vehicles of which I then knew not the names, and still know them not. By far the greater part of this immense crowd, however, were on foot; and I felt almost bewildered as I passed and repassed amongst them, watched their dresses and gestures, and listened to their various tongues. When I bethought me, moreover, of the singular political circumstances which had combined to bring together such a diversified multitude, from every corner of the globe, to worship strange gods, to live happy and free, and to enjoy their wealth in peace and security under the guns of an English fortress, twelve thousand miles from home, I scarcely knew how to contain the expression of wonder which this novel and brilliant scene was so well calculated to inspire.

I have only once more to repeat, that he who wishes to see all, or nearly all, which the Eastern world affords, that is

characteristic in the dress, language, or manners, of the Asiatic nations, in the shortest time, and at the least expense of money or trouble, has only to make a run to Bombay; and if on arriving there he be not gratified far beyond his expectations, he must—to use the common phrase, be very hard to please.

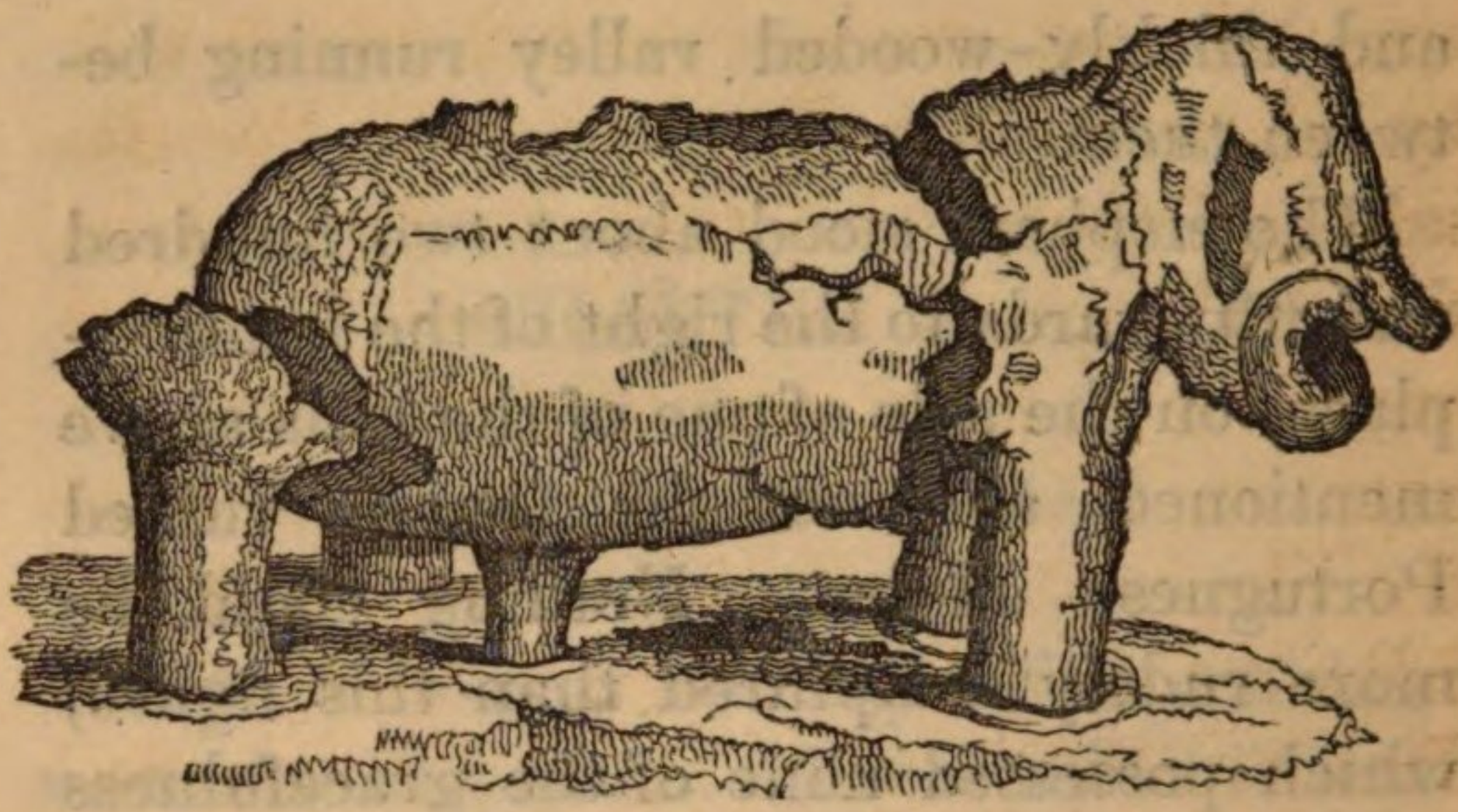
# CHAPTER V.

## PANORAMAS OF INDIA.

No one is long at Bombay before making a run to Elephanta. I remember it was on a Sunday evening, though I could get no one to accompany me, which I was secretly very glad of, that I slipped away from a party, hired a bunder-boat, and, aided by a fresh wind from the south, skimmed up the harbour, dashed stem on the beach, and landed just below the spot where stood, but, I am sorry to say, no longer stands, the huge stone elephant from whence the island, in our nomenclature, has derived its title. This island, which is called by the natives Gara-poori, or Place of Caves, from two words in the Mahratta language, lies exactly six miles from Bombay castle, and five from the main shore of India; it is between three and four miles in circumference, and is composed of two long hills, with a narrow

and thickly-wooded valley running between them.

The elephant stood about two hundred and fifty yards to the right of the landing-place, on the side of one of the hills above mentioned, and not far from a ruined Portuguese edifice. Nothing could be more rudely sculptured than this figure, which possessed none of the gracefulness of the living elephant, though in some of the sculptures in the cave temples of India that character is exceedingly well preserved. I was in much too great a hurry at my first visit to think of measuring or drawing this singular specimen of ancient Hindoo art; but about a year afterwards, in company with Mr. William Erskine, of Bombay, a complete set of measurements of all his dimensions were made, and I also took a sketch of the figure, then almost tottering to its fall. The wood-cut on the following page is from a drawing made on the spot, and, though slight, it conveys a pretty correct idea of the form and proportions of this celebrated figure. Some of the dimensions which we took are also given.



| | Ft. | In. |
|---|---|---|
| Length from the forehead to the tail | 13 | 2 |
| Height of the head ..... | 7 | 4 |
| Circumference at the height of the shoulders ..... | 35 | 5 |
| Circumference round the four legs | 32 | 0 |
| Breadth of the back ..... | 8 | 0 |
| Girth of the body ..... | 20 | 0 |
| Length of the legs, from 5 ft. to .. | 6 | 0 |
| Circumference of ditto, from 6 feet 3 inches to ..... | 7 | 7 |
| Length of the supporter ..... | 2 | 2 |
| Length of the tail (not seen in the above sketch) ..... | 7 | 9 |
| Length of the trunk ..... | 7 | 10 |
| Remains of the right tusk ..... | 0 | 11 |

In September 1814, before I left India, the head and neck dropped off, and the body shortly afterwards sunk down to the earth; so that, I fear, all traces of

our old and much-respected friend will by this time have disappeared. For the sake of those who take an interest in these things, I am glad we bestirred ourselves in time, and that quite as minute an account as can be desired of the Elephant, in all his bearings, is faithfully recorded in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

Captain Pyke, who wrote in 1712, exactly a hundred years before our visit, mentions that the Elephant carried a smaller one upon him; and Anquetil describes the young elephant as still existing in 1760. Niebuhr observes, in 1764, that the Elephant had on its back something which age had worn so much that it had become impossible to distinguish what it was. I perceive it asserted in a note of mine to Mr. Erskine's account, that in 1813 the small figure on the top could not have been an elephant, but may have been a tiger! Thus it is, that the fewer and more indistinct the data we possess, the more confidently we often pronounce upon a dubious fact.

After paying my respects to this celebrated figure, I set off as fast as I could run, to save the little daylight that was left; for the sun had set before we reached the island, and I was anxious to catch a glimpse of the caves. The panting guide toiled after me in vain, and I had well nigh lost myself in the jungle from the extremity of my impatience to secure at least one glance at the stupendous wonder which I knew to be close at hand. As I scampered along, a curious species of delusion came over me, which I have experienced on several other occasions not altogether dissimilar. I allude to those agitating moments when one is on the very edge of a discovery, and just about to witness in reality something upon which the mind's eye has so long rested, that its imaginative character has almost gained the ascendency in our belief over its actual existence. Under such fantastic circumstances I have often become half afraid that some accident was still to occur to interfere with the accomplishment of a purpose so long and ardently sought after; and have felt as if some

magical process were in action to carry the whole scene out of reach.

I remember, in particular, three other occasions when a very strong presentiment of this distracting nature haunted my mind, and rendered the period which preceded the events any thing but agreeable.

When summoned to Buonaparte's antechamber, and told that "in two or three minutes the Emperor Napoleon would give me an audience," this tormenting feeling came fully into play. While waiting in this apartment, and listening to the creak of the mighty monarch's shoes, I held my breath till I was well nigh suffocated, and trembled with a sort of dread that some untoward event would yet spring up to stand between me and a sight of him who had been so long the foremost man of all the world.

I was less fortunate the next time, when under the influence of a similar dread of being thwarted in my wish. I had always a vehement desire to see and converse with Lord Byron; and on being seized with an ague at Venice in 1818,

I solicited and received the benefit of his friendly offices. But even then, when in communication with him by notes and messages, I had a strong feeling that I was never to be gratified by a sight of the noble poet himself. I once actually heard his voice in the neighbouring apartment, but was too unwell to admit him to the room, or even to raise my head. Still, I made certain that, after all, I was to be disappointed—and so it proved.

The third occasion was that of Niagara; and I remember quite well having a still stranger fancy perplexing me then. I had an idea, very vague of course, and only floating about in my brain in the most evanescent style possible, that although ten minutes would suffice to bring the cataract in sight, I might perhaps not live long enough to see it! In my anxiety to secure the first possible glimpse, I gave my neck a twist by stretching it and bending it out of the window of the carriage, as we drove along the top of the perpendicular bank, overhanging the river below the falls.

The caves of Elephanta, indeed, have

hardly pretensions to stand in the same group of wonders with those above alluded to. But when I first visited India I was about fifteen years younger, and my blood was completely on the boil with curiosity in all that related to the Eastern world. Neither did I find this high fever of orientalism ever subside while on the spot, or indeed since. On the contrary, the taste for Asiatic wonders gained fresh accessions with every new gratification, till at times I almost fancied I must have been struck by that wild calenture of the brain caused by the vertical rays of the tropical sun, which seems to turn the open sea into such beautiful green fields and fruited gardens, that the enchanted seaman is with difficulty prevented from leaping overboard.

However this may be, I am persuaded the unhappy guide who accompanied me into the great cave at Elephanta thought me utterly bewitched. At all events, he speedily made a side move towards the opening, so as to secure his retreat, and there stood with his arms folded on his breast, the Eastern attitude of respect, gazing with a

mixture of fear and astonishment at the antics I cut, and the vehement shouts I sent forth on first getting sight of the gigantic triple head which forms the principal feature in this prodigious temple.

The very curious specimen of Hindoo sculpture alluded to, which is by far the finest work in the cave, is most correctly represented in the vignette to this volume, copied from a drawing by the late Mrs. Ashburner, of Bombay.

As the night was falling rapidly, I could make no sketches, nor take any measurements of consequence. I, therefore, merely satisfied myself that the distance from the top of the nose to the bottom of the chin of the centre head was three feet and two inches, and that the length of the nose was one foot seven inches and a half. I also spanned several of the columns; and easily ascertained the height of the roof, by means of a pole, to be about sixteen feet. I then scampered round the different compartments, or chapels, into which the cave is divided, till it was almost pitch dark, and, at last, tugged myself away from a scene which, nearly

as much as any I think I have ever beheld, filled up the expectations previously formed of it. It is quite true, that nothing I now saw bore the smallest resemblance to what I had been led to expect from the numerous accounts I had read; but as the whole was much more interesting than had been looked for, there could be no reasonable complaint on that score. I had seen quite enough to shew that there were many good days' work before me, and came away fully resolved to return next morning, to devote myself exclusively to the cave, to cut all society, and even to give up the various objects of high and exciting interest connected with the famine at Bombay; in short, to forget every other thing but the caves of Elephanta.

How little can we reckon upon such resolutions! It was hardly possible that any man could be more in earnest than I then was, and yet it was upwards of a year afterwards before I again entered the cave, with which I had been so much enchanted as to swear I would not forsake it! The real truth is—and this I have learned by much actual experience

in every quarter of the world—that the social living interests of good company, and the mutual communications of friendship between man and man, are, to my mind at least, vastly more attractive than the most curious objects of the inanimate world. I would almost back a pleasant dinner-party, or a promising ball, against the greatest natural wonder, or even artificial curiosity, that art or nature ever turned out of hand!

It must be owned, that of all the lions of India, there are few to compare with the cave temples of Elephanta, which, from lying within less than one hour's sail of the town of Bombay, form the scene of many a pleasure-party, a circumstance which ought to add considerably to the recommendation I have already given, that any person wishing to behold at a glance all the wonders of the East, should select Bombay rather than any other place. The island of Elephanta lies only a few miles further up the harbour than the spot where the ships anchor off the fort; and as large and commodious boats, covered with awnings,

are to be had at a minute's warning, nothing is so easy as to transport one's self from the midst of the European society of the presidency, or from the bustle of the crowded native bazaar, into the most complete solitude. As the island is not inhabited, the traveller finds himself at once undisturbed amidst some of the oldest and most curious, or, at all events, most striking remains of the ancient grandeur of the Hindoos, which are any where to be met with. The effect, I have no doubt, is considerably augmented by the unusual abruptness of the change from a scene of such particular bustle to another of entire stillness. There are many points of intrinsic local interest about Elephanta which rank it very high in the scale of curiosity; yet it is one of those wonders which, although it may far exceed in interest what we expect, necessarily baffles anticipation. No drawing can represent it. Even a panorama, which, in the case of Niagara, I am convinced might convey to European senses most of the wonders of the great American cataract, could make nothing of Elephanta. The only device

that could give a just conception of the form, size, colour, and so on, of these caves, would be a model of the full dimensions, similar to what Belzoni exhibited of a mummy pit in Egypt. But even such a gigantic work as the model supposed, though it might entertain some folks, would prove but a poor speculation, I suspect, in London. Not two persons in every ten thousand of those who daily pass Charing Cross ever heard of this wonderful cave; and if seduced into the show by the familiar influence of the name Elephanta, they would probably expect to see their old friend of Exeter 'Change swallowing a bushel of rice at a mouthful, or picking up a needle with his trunk.

Even were such a model, or exact copy of Elephanta to be examined by a person who really cared about such things, and had heard so much of the caves as to be interested in their details, the model would of necessity fail to produce on his mind the full effect of seeing the original on the spot. The associations of place, and other circumstances, such as climate,

scenery, and historical recollections, perhaps constitute the greater portion of such interest. What could the rattle of carriages outside the brick walls containing a panorama of Elephanta furnish to the imagination, compared to the rustling of the monsoon through the branches of the mangoe, the banana, and the tamarind, or high aloft amongst the cocoa-nuts, and the flickering fan-shaped leaves of the brab-tree? What ideas of time and place would be suggested by the presence of six or eight families of sober citizens, with their attendant swarms of little holyday cockneys, from the schools of Putney and Pentonville, compared to the bright fancies conjured up by the glow of an Indian landscape, and the presence of numerous groups of Hindoos scattered on the grass, under the shade of some broad-leaved plantain, or, more appropriate still,

"Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
Couched among fallen columns"

of the great temple once held so sacred by every worshipper of Shiva and Shakti, though now desecrated, and half destroyed

by the rude hands of their heretical conquerors.

But although it be utterly hopeless to gain a just idea of Elephanta by other means than an actual visit, I must not be understood as saying any thing to depreciate panoramas of objects which fall within the range of that stupendous branch of the art. These paintings are, in fact, the greatest possible allies to a traveller in his descriptions: witness the beautiful representation of Madras now exhibiting in London, and painted by Mr. William Daniell, an artist who, from long residence in the East, has acquired the habit of feeling his subject so thoroughly, that the power of expressing it seems a sort of instinct. I certainly never beheld any thing comparable to the taste and fidelity with which all that is characteristic of Indian climate and scenery in general, and of the Madras variety of it in particular, not forgetting the magnificent surf, has been preserved in this exquisite panorama. It is very mortifying to think that in a few months this masterpiece, in its way, will be painted over,

and lost for ever. It is nearly hopeless, indeed, to expect that another such painter of oriental scenery as Daniell shall start up in our day; and even if he did, it might not suit his views to paint panoramas.

If the India House possessed a circular room of adequate dimensions, it would be well worthy of their magnificent style of doing things, to rescue and fix up this painting of Madras, in evidence to future times of the splendour of their rule in these days. Is there no rich old Indian, or nobleman, or wealthy patron of the fine arts in this country, who might be tempted to step forward to snatch from destruction a work of the highest order of excellence, and calculated to live for centuries, but which, merely for the value of the base canvass on which it is drawn, will ere long be daubed over to form a ground for another picture?*

* Since the above observations were written, I have learned with great satisfaction, from the distinguished artist himself, that although for the present he has taken down the Panorama of Madras, he has no intention of painting any thing else over it, but hopes, ere long, to exhibit it in a situation more easy of access than it has hitherto occupied.

I wish I could say as much for the panorama of Bombay, a spot which is even more picturesque than Madras, and eminently suited for a work of this description. But the misfortune is, that it must have been painted by a person who, I should suppose, has never actually been in the East, and can have formed no adequate conception of Indian scenery. The consequence is, that neither in colouring, nor in drawing, is the local costume fully preserved. In the word 'costume' may be included not merely the dress of the figures, but that of inanimate nature. The slender, graceful, delicate Hindoos, are represented in this panorama as brawny Irish labourers; while in that of Madras, by the experienced Daniell, the figures are drawn with such perfect truth, that, while we almost see the natives moving about, we fancy we can catch the sounds of the palankeen bearers' voices, as they bustle along. Every thing, it is true, appears to be drawn with the most correct outline in the panorama of Bombay; but, after all, there is not much in the picture which forcibly recalls oriental

scenery; whereas in that of Madras, every square inch is redolent of hot climates, crowded with Asiatic images, and fertile in what may be called historical and political associations peculiar to our Indian administration.

My reason for touching on these two panoramas is, not to puff off that of Madras, or to injure the receipts at the other; but merely to make a practical remark on the subject of panoramas in general, which may have its use in assisting the judgment of those persons who have not enjoyed similar means of studying their merits. Of the fidelity of such representations as that of London, every resident may, of course, judge for himself; and even that of Paris may find a sufficient number of competent critics.

Every one who has visited the Colosseum has probably heard the anecdote of the worthy citizen of London, who repaired to the panorama the moment it was opened, and at one glance pronounced the whole a failure, loudly declaring he would dissuade all his friends from visiting so incomplete a production. The painter

himself, (from whom I have the story,) happening to be present, begged to know the grounds of so prompt and sweeping a criticism, on a work which had occupied several years of patient labour.

"Why, look ye there, sir! That is my house, and the knocker is placed over the plate, instead of under."

The panorama painters of such scenes as are close at hand, are accordingly obliged to make themselves minutely acquainted, in person, with the spots represented, otherwise their pretensions go for nothing; their work is soon discovered to be done by one who has not seen the original, and the shillings cease to pour in. But when the painter comes to handle a remote country, such as Rio de Janeiro, or Bombay, for example, what possible means have the great mass of visitors of estimating the fidelity of the representation? They can have none. The consequence is, that, in many instances, nearly as much error is taught as genuine knowledge. I venture, indeed, to say, that the preponderance is always on the side of error, whenever it so happens that the artist who actually

finishes the work has not himself visited the scene represented. It is almost, or, I believe I might say quite, impossible, for any man to paint a truly correct picture from the sketches of another. The best drawings, aided by all the camera obscuras and camera lucidas in the world, though coloured on the spot by the best draughtsman that ever left home, must still, of absolute necessity, fail to include myriads of objects, which, though utterly unsuitable for representation in detail on canvass, do nevertheless, in point of fact, cover the retina of the painter's eye with images of colour, form, light, and shade, and all those et-cæteras which combine on the spot to impress not only his sense of sight, but his understanding and feelings, with a just conception of the place he is looking at. When a pictorial representation of all this is to be made, the chief study of an artist who, from personal examination, has become completely master of the subject, is not so much what to keep in, as what to keep out. In order to make even a tolerably good picture, his store of local ideas, to be

productive, must be accumulated in vast excess; and to be pleasing or essentially instructive, the result ought to consist of such selections only, from this superabundance of materials, as shall best convey to spectators at a distance a just conception of the whole.

It is a task sufficiently hard even for a man of taste, talents, and industry, as well as much experience and practice, to make, though on the spot, a perfectly satisfactory drawing of a new scene; that is to say, such a picture as shall not only satisfy a traveller who has visited the spot, but shall produce, as far as possible, an impression similar to what a view of the reality would leave on the mind of a person who should be allowed to take merely a glance of the original. To hope that any such result can attend the labours of those panorama painters who work entirely from the sketches, or even from the most elaborate drawings of others, without having themselves ever visited the scenes represented, is to look for an impossibility. I have had opportunities of comparing a great many pano-

ramas with the scenes pretended to be represented in foreign parts, and have invariably found that when the actual painter himself had not been on the spot to make the drawings, the work has proved unsatisfactory. That of Rio de Janeiro, for instance, taught, as I conceive, more error than truth. Although the outlines may have been correct, the distances were so outrageously perverted, that merely to look at it made any one's head ache who had been there. The impression, indeed, produced on the feelings by the panorama alluded to was like that left by a disturbed feverish dream. We could see quite well that the capital of Brazil was intended; but no two parts of the harbour, the town, or the hills, stood in their relative places as to distance, consequently every thing looked out of joint and disproportioned. The colouring, too, and the shading, were equally distorted; so that the whole picture was rendered inexpressibly painful to an eye familiar with the reality.

As a matter of mere curiosity, we should go to every panorama of places which we have seen; but if the work have been

executed by one who has not visited the spot, we seldom feel much desire to go a second time; whereas, if it bears the stamp of local knowledge, we find that each visit only enhances the interest. This, however, will rarely take place except when the painter is a man of talents and genius; for the mere fact of his having visited the object will not inspire dulness with taste, nor give to mediocrity the power of bringing home such scenes as Niagara or Teneriffe. And this, by the way, reminds me of a resolution I have made, never to cease urging the panorama proprietors to give us on canvass one or both of these magnificent scenes, which are, perhaps, the subjects best adapted for their purposes of any they can now find untouched. But the task must positively be done by a person who shall go to the spot for that express purpose; I do not mean, to make sketches for others to paint from, but to make the actual drawings, which he himself is afterwards to convert into a panorama. He must also be a man who understands his business well, and who is determined to

do justice to such noble themes; and my life for it, he will make his fortune by the exhibition.

The time required for an expedition to Niagara need not much exceed three months in all, and the expenses of travelling, every thing included, may be considerably under a hundred pounds. The voyage out will occupy, say five weeks, the cost 35 guineas; home again three weeks, at 30 guineas, which makes two months of sea voyage, and the expense under £70. The land journey to the Falls, say four or five days, and back again as many, leaves nearly three weeks of the three months for actual work. The cost of the double journey, and the living in the mean time, would certainly be much under £30. The wear and tear of sea-sickness is, indeed, a formidable drawback; and the dead loss of eight weeks at sea forms another serious consideration; but the result, I think, would afford one of the most popular exhibitions the public have yet seen. Of this I am very strongly persuaded, because I see no sort of difficulty in bringing away al-

most every thing that is characteristic of Niagara, and holding it up to view at a distance from the scene itself, without any material loss of the interest which belongs essentially to an actual sight of the Falls.

In the first place, the forms assumed by the different parts of this mighty cataract are absolutely invariable. I have watched particular spots for half a day without detecting the change of a hair's-breadth; and it is well known as one of the most striking peculiarities of Niagara, that the variations of the seasons, which, more or less, affect every other waterfall, cause no visible change in this monarch of cascades. One singular result of this invariable aspect is an appearance almost of stillness; that is to say, there is none of that tumbling and tossing about which one is apt to imagine there must be. All its movements are solemn, uniform, sublime; and withal so perfectly unvarying, that they come quite within the reach, I should conceive, of a painter's skill to represent with that fidelity which, taken along with the proper degree of help from the imagination, would

leave hardly any thing wanting on the score of motion. According to the time of the day, the altitude of the sun, and the state of the weather, the lights and shades along the Fall certainly do vary considerably. But a painter of any genius, and true knowledge of his art, would soon discover which of these varieties was most effective, and seize for representation that phase best calculated to aid him in his great enterprise. Be it remembered, too, that (unlike almost any other place of note) there are no local associations worth a straw about Niagara, and that it is the cataract itself, and nothing else, which we care for. The scenery in the neighbourhood is below contempt, the ground being uniformly flat, the trees stunted, and the whole prospect uninteresting; nor is there any thing in the history of those regions either to add to, or to take from, the interest of the mere Fall. This is what we can say of hardly any other scene fit for the honour of being represented in a panorama.

There are positions from which the Fall might be made to occupy between

one-half and two-thirds of the circumference: the rapids and the bendings of the river below, with a portion of the cliffs, might be made to fill up the remaining portion of the circle with great effect.

When we look at the panorama of Naples, we sigh on missing the climate, and the fruits, and the myriads of antique interests, which we know belong to the spot, but cannot be brought away. Or if we turn to the delightful representation of Gibraltar, we feel an eager desire to climb the rock that we may look over the steep face which is turned to the Levant; or view, on one hand, the country of Don Quixote; on the other, the birth-place of the Moors, and the scene of Mungo Park's travels, the delight of our youthful reading. But Niagara has no history and no associations which must be left behind.

As to the noise, that really need go for nothing. I have often sat very near the cataract, without being sensible of any unusual sound, for its loudness depends very much on the wind; and forms, generally speaking, no material portion

of the grandeur of the scene. At certain places, I admit, the noise is grand enough, but it clearly forms no essential part; and the simpler beauties and wonders of this glorious spectacle would, of course, form the chief source of interest—I may say of permanent interest. For if this panorama were well executed, it could not fail to impart some portion of the pleasure communicated by the reality, which differs from almost every other my various wanderings have made me acquainted with. Instead of fading on the memory, or being disturbed by fresh sights, Niagara only becomes brighter and brighter with a more extended experience of the rest of the world.

The caves of Elephanta are not, by any means, of the same stamp; but they possess their own share of deep interest, which will not let them slip off the recollection. I was not more anxious to get sight of Niagara than to have a look at Elephanta; nor can I pretend to say which of the two gratified me most at first sight. Comparisons, after all, between such incongruous things are not only useless, but

absurd. It is like comparing the pleasure of viewing the Elgin marbles with the surprise caused by hearing a concerto played on one string. The first is pure, sublime, and enduring; the other is strange, inexplicable, and transient. One we recollect merely for its singularity, the other for its instruction in genuine taste and refined fancy. Elephanta, therefore, considered as a work of art, may be compared to one of Paganini's extravaganzas in music. Niagara, on the other hand, in grandeur and severe simplicity, is about as difficult to match amongst the natural wonders of the earth, as the Parthenon of Athens amongst the works of man. Rivals, no doubt, may be found; but I suspect they will both remain for ever at the top of their respective classes.

# CHAPTER VI.

## SIR SAMUEL HOOD AND THE ALLIGATOR HUNT.

As soon as the Volage was refitted, and her crew refreshed, after our voyage from England of four months and a half, we sailed from Bombay to the southward along the western coast of India; and having rounded Ceylon, at the extreme south-western corner of which, Point de Galle, where we merely touched to land the governor's despatches, we hauled up to the northward, and, after twelve days' passage, sailed into the beautiful harbour of Trincomalee. There, to my great joy, we found the commander-in-chief, Sir Samuel Hood; who, to my still greater joy, communicated that a vacancy had been kept open for me in his flag-ship, the Illustrious. In a few minutes my traps were packed up, my commission made out, and I had the honour and the happi-

ness of hailing myself a professional follower of one of the first officers in His Majesty's service. It is true, I was only fifth lieutenant of the ship, and not even fifth on the Admiral's list for promotion; for I came after a number of old officers who had served under Sir Samuel for many long years of patient, or rather impatient expectation. But my first and grand purpose was attained, viz. that of getting fairly into the line of promotion; and for a time I did not fret much, or consider myself the most ill-used man in the service, merely because my chance of advancement was very small, and remote.

In capstans, and other machines, there is a mechanical device with which every person is acquainted, termed a pall or catch, by which the work gained by the effort last made shall be secured, and the machine prevented from turning back again. Something of this kind takes place in life, particularly in naval life; and happy is the officer who hears the pall of his fortunes play 'click! click!' as he rapidly spins up to the highest stations in his profession. Proportionately deep

is the despair of the poor wretch who, after struggling and tugging with all his might at the weary windlass of his hopes, can never bring it quite far enough round to hear the joyous sound of the pall dropping into its birth! I well remember most of these important moments of my own life; and I could readily describe the different sensations to which their successive occurrence gave rise, from the startling hour (thirty years ago) when my father first told me that my own request was now to be granted, for on the very next day I was to go to sea—up to that instant when the still more important and awful announcement met my ear, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder!"

Nothing perhaps more distinctly characterises men than the different manner in which they behave on these occasions. One person acquiring fresh spirits from the consciousness of so much of his fortunes being secured, plants his foot more firmly on the deck, and grasping the handspike anew, springs aloft to command by a still more vigorous effort of his

strength, the next revolution of the windlass; while another man, similarly circumstanced, remains content with the first step gained. It is wrong, however, to say that he remains content, for there is no contentment in the sluggishness with which he waits till some one helps him to accomplish that purpose which he has not energy enough to attempt single-handed. In two words: the classes of people we are speaking of may be divided into those who know how to avail themselves of the opportunities within their reach, and those who will not, or, at all events, who do not, screw up their courage to the sticking-place alluded to. There is a charming sea-song by Dibdin (that prince of nautical minstrels!) one part of which often came to my aid in seasons of professional despondency:

"So I seized the capstan-bar
Like a true-hearted tar,
And in spite of sighs and tears sung out, Yo heave ho."

"It is easy to be cheerful when one is successful," says a high authority; and there are "few people who are not good-

natured when they have nothing to cross them," says another equally profound recorder of common-places; but the secret of good fortune seems to lie far less in making the most of favourable incidents, or in submitting manfully to disastrous ones, than in studying how to fill up to advantage the long intervals between these great epochs in our lives. Perhaps, therefore, there is no point of duty which affords more scope for the talents of a superior than the useful and cheerful employment of the heads and hands of his officers and people during those trying periods of inaction which occur in every service. Sir Samuel Hood possessed this faculty in a wonderful degree, as he not only kept us all busy when there was nothing to be done, but contrived to make us happy and contented, though some of our prospects were poor enough in all conscience. My own, for example; for I was placed at the tip of the tail of his long string of private followers; and when the Admiralty List came out, on which I had built so many beautiful castles in the air, my poor name was not upon it at all. I

had not expected to be first or second, or even third; fourth I had reckoned upon as possible; fifth as probable; sixth as certain; so that my horror and disappointment were excessive when this kindest of commanders-in-chief broke to me the fatal news, in the following characteristic manner.

A telegraphic signal had been made from the flag-staff at the Admiral's house to the ship, in these words:

"Send Mr. Hall on shore, with a crow-bar, two pick-axes, and two spades."

All the way to the landing-place I puzzled myself with thinking what on earth could be the object of these tools; little dreaming, good easy lieutenant! that I was so soon to dig the grave of my own hopes. The Admiral received me at the door with his coat off; and holding out his remaining hand (his right arm was shot away in action), he squeezed mine with even more than his wonted kindness.

"I have been waiting for you with some impatience," he said, "to be present at the hunt after a white ant's nest, a sort of thing I know you like. These

rogues, the *Termites bellicosi*, as I find the naturalists call them, have made their way into the house; and having carried their galleries up the walls and along the roof, have come down in great force upon a trunk of clothes, which they would have destroyed entirely before night had I not caught sight of them. Now let us to work; for I propose to rip up the floor of the verandah, in order to follow their passages and galleries till I reach their nest, if it be a mile off; won't this be a glorious piece of service?" exclaimed the Admiral, as he warmed himself by anticipating the chase. He could hardly have been more delighted, I am persuaded, had he been giving orders for a fleet under his command to bear down upon the enemy's line. Of course I failed not to feign or feel the enthusiasm of my commander-in-chief—a little of both, perhaps; for the utmost possible, or even conceivable, familiarity of an Admiral, will scarcely ever crack the ice of a lieutenant's reserve in his commander-in-chief's presence. We may cherish and obey him, as much, or more, than any wife ever did, or pro-

mised to do, her spouse; but I never yet saw a naval man, in uniform or in plain clothes, on shore or afloat, sober or merry, that could, even in appearance, bring himself to take a liberty with one who, in times past—no matter how long—had once been his commanding officer. This truth is doubly, trebly true at moments of actual service; and though Sir Samuel was all smiles and favour, standing without his coat in the verandah with a crow-bar in his grasp, his bare breast and single arm exposed naked to the sea-breeze, then just beginning to puff at intervals over the low, red-hot isthmus or neck of land between the inner harbour and the eastern beach, I could not venture to do more than bow, and say I was much obliged to him for having so considerately thought of me at such a moment.

"Oh!" cried he, apparently recollecting himself, "but I have something else to shew you, or rather to tell you, for I must not shew it to you; though I fear it will not please you quite so much as the prospect of a white ant hunt. Here, Gigna," called the Admiral to his steward,

who stood by with a tea-kettle of hot water ready to pour over the ants, "put away that affair, which we shall not require this half hour yet; and hold this crow-bar while I step into the office with Mr. Hall."

"It is of no use to mince the matter," said the veteran, shutting the door, and turning to me with somewhat of the air which he might be supposed to have put on, had he been instructed from home to tell me that one or both my parents were dead; "it is no use to conceal the fact from you; but here is the Admiralty List, just come to my hands, and your name, in spite of all you tell me of promises, verbal and written, is NOT ON IT!"

Had the Admiral fired one of the flagship's thirty-two pounders, double-shotted, down my throat, he could not have demolished more completely my bodily frame-work than this fatal announcement shattered to pieces the gilded crockery-ware of my fondest hopes. All the gay visions of command, and power, and independence, in which I had indulged my fancy during

the voyage, vanished like the shadows of a dream I fain would recall, but could not. I stood at first quite stupified, and can remember nothing that passed for some minutes. As I recovered my scattered senses, however, I recollect gazing at the anchorage from the open window of the Admiralty House, near which we stood. The flag-ship then lay just off Osnaburgh Point, with her ensign, or, as it used to be called in old books, her Ancient, the "meteor flag of England," dropped, in the calm, so perpendicularly from the gaff end, that it looked like a rope more than a flag; while its reflection, as well as that of the ship herself, with every mast, yard, and line of the rigging, seemed, as it were, engraved on the surface of the tranquil pool, as distinctly as if another vessel had actually been inverted and placed beneath. I have seldom witnessed so complete a calm. The sea-breeze, with which the shore had been refreshed for twenty minutes, had not as yet found its way into the recesses of the inner harbour, which, take it all in all, is one of the snuggest and most beautiful coves in the

world. And such is the commodious nature of this admirable port, that even the Illustrious, though a large 74-gun ship, rode at anchor in perfect security, within a very few yards of the beach, which at that spot is quite steep-to, and is wooded down to the very edge of the water. I gazed for some minutes, almost unconsciously, at this quiet scene, so different from that which was boiling and bubbling in my own distracted breast, and swelling up with indignation against some of my truest friends at home, whom I had such good reason to believe had either betrayed or neglected me, maugre all sorts of promises.

In the midst of my reverie—which the kind-hearted Admiral did not interrupt—I observed the wind just touch the drooping flag; but the air was so light and transient, that it merely produced on it a gentle motion from side to side, like that of a pendulum, imitated in the mirror beneath, which lay as yet totally unbroken by the sea-breeze. Presently the whole mighty flag, after a faint struggle or two, gradually unfolded itself, and, buoyed up

by the new-born gale, spread far beyond the gallant line-of-battle ship's stern, and waved gracefully over the harbour. It is well known to nice observers of the human mind, that the strangest fancies often come into the thoughts at a moment when we might least expect them; and though, assuredly, I was not then in a very poetical or imaginative humour, I contrived to shape out of the inspiring scene I was looking upon, a figure to soothe my disappointed spirit. As I saw the ensign uncurl itself to the wind, I said internally, "If I have but life, and health, and opportunity, I trust—for all the bitterness of this disappointment—I shall yet contrive to unfold, in like manner, the flag of my own fortunes to the world."

Just as this magnanimous thought crossed my mind's eye, the Admiral placed his hand so gently on my shoulder that the pressure would not have hurt a fly, and said, in a cheerful tone, "Never mind this mishap, Master Hall; every thing will come right in time; and if you only resolve to take it in the proper and manly

temper, it may even prove all the better that this has happened. Nothing is without a remedy in this world; and I'll do what I can to make good this maxim in your case. In the meantime, however, come along, and help me to rout out these rascally white ants. Off coat, however, if you please; for we shall have a tough job of it."

It cost us an hour's hard work; for we had to rip up the planks along the whole of the verandah, then to shape a course across two cellars, or godongs, as they are called in the East, and finally the traverses of these singular animals obliged us to cut a trench to the huge hillock or nest, which rose to the height of five or six feet from the ground, in numberless shoots, like pinnacles round the roof of a Gothic church. We might have attacked them at head-quarters in the first instance, had we wished it; but the Admiral chose to go more technically to work, and to sap up to his enemy by regular approaches. In this way we had the means of seeing the principles upon which these ants proceed in securing them-

selves at every step of their progress by galleries or covered ways, which, though extremely feeble, are sufficiently strong to keep off the attacks of every other kind of ant. It is curious enough, that although the white ant be the most destructive of its species, it is said to be, individually, by far the weakest, and cannot move a step without the artificial protection of the galleries it constructs as it goes along; just as the besiegers of a fortification secure themselves in their trenches and zigzags.

We now brought our spades into play; and having cut the hill across, laid open the secrets of these most curious of all the ant tribe. At last we reached the great queen ant, the mother of millions of her race, a most enormous personage to be sure, nearly four inches long, and as thick as a man's finger, with a head not bigger than that of a bee, but a body such as I have described, filled with eggs, which continually rolled out like a fluid from a reservoir. Never shall I forget the shout of rapture which the gallant Admiral sent over half the harbour, as

he succeeded in gaining the object of his labour.*

There are some men who go about every thing they undertake with all their hearts and souls, and this great officer was one of those. He did nothing by halves and quarters, like so many other men. The greatest deeds of arms, or the most trivial objects of passing amusement, engrossed his whole concentrated attention for the time. He was equally in earnest when holding out examples of private generosity, or lending the heartiest and kindest encouragement even to the least distinguished of his followers, as when performing acts of the highest public spirit, or making the greatest sacrifices to what he considered his duty. Every thing, in short, that he did, or thought, or uttered, bore the stamp of the same peculiar impress of genuine zeal. So eminently exciting, and even fascinating, was this truly officer-like conduct, that

* See an exceedingly interesting account of the *Termes bellicosus*, or white ant, in Shaw's Zoology, vol. vi., taken chiefly from the Philosophical Transactions for the year 1781.

even those who had served under him the longest often wondered at the extent of their own exertions when roused by his example, and were led almost to believe that his very look had something stimulating in it which actually gave fresh vigour to their arms as well as to their thoughts. With all this, he was the gentlest of the gentle, and accomplished all he undertook without apparent effort, or the least consciousness that what he was doing was remarkable.

I remember an instance of his skill in the small way. One morning, near the spot where he had headed the storming-party against the white ants, a working party of the crew of the Illustrious had commenced constructing a wharf before the dock-yard. The stones of which this platform or landing-place was to be built were, by Sir Samuel Hood's orders, selected of very large dimensions, so much so, that the sailors came at last to deal with a mass of rock so heavy, that their combined strength proved unequal to moving it beyond a few inches towards its final position at the top of one cor-

ner. The Admiral sat on his horse looking at the workmen for some time, occasionally laughing and occasionally calling out directions, which the baffled engineers could by no means apply. At length His Excellency the commander-in-chief became fidgety, and having dismounted, he tried to direct them in detail; but never a bit would the stone budge. Finally, losing all patience, he leaped from the top of the bank, and roared out, in a voice of reproach and provocation, "Give me the crow-bar!" Thus armed, he pushed the officers and men to the right and left, while he insisted upon having the whole job to himself, literally, single-handed. He first drove the claws of the instrument well under the edge of the stone, then placed with his toe a small iron pin on the ground under the bar, and across its length, to act as a fulcrum, or shoulder. When all things were carefully adjusted to his mind, he slipped his hand to the upper end of the lever, and weighing it down, gave what he called 'life' to the huge stone, which just before half-a-dozen strong men had

not been able to disturb. Sure enough, however, it now moved, though only about half an inch, towards its intended resting-place. At each prize or hitch of the bar, the rock appeared to advance farther, till, after five or six similar shifts, it was finally lodged in the station prepared for it, where, I doubt not, it rests to this day, and may occupy for centuries to come.

I need scarcely say that the Admiral himself was delighted with his triumph, or that his provocation against the men subsided at each successful march of the stone, till, at length, when the operation was completed, he flung down the bar, and called out to the grinning party, but with infinite good humour, "There! you hay-making, tinkering, tailoring fellows, that's the way to move a stone—when you know how!"

In fact, no officer I have ever served with, better 'knew how,' not only himself to do every thing 'that might become a man,' but how to stimulate others to do so likewise; or, if need should be, as in this instance of the corner-stone, to instruct them practically. What is inte-

resting, however, and still more important in every way, he never lost sight of his own true dignity, or weakened his personal or his official authority, by any such condescensions. On the contrary, both appeared only to be enhanced by familiarities which such a mind alone could safely trust itself with, and which, from their being totally devoid of affectation, were always suitable to his character, and appropriate to the circumstances as well as persons in whose favour they were granted. This unreserved freedom of manner, an officer, less gifted by nature, or not so thoroughly master of his business in all its branches, could hardly have indulged in; but in Sir Samuel Hood's hands it became an instrument of great importance, and invariably turned the heartiest exertions of every officer and man under him to his purpose, which, I need scarcely add, was synonymous with the public good.

The loss of such a man to the country at large, and to the naval service in particular, was in many respects irreparable; for although his example must ever dwell

deeply engraven on the minds of those who knew him personally, he carried away with him to his early grave very much which no instruction could impart, no memory supply, nor indeed any eulogium do justice to. I allude chiefly to that rare combination of talents and professional experience welded together by the highest public spirit, animated to useful action by the most ardent zeal which perhaps ever possessed an officer. I have sometimes thought, that a professional sketch of this great commander's career, including, as it might readily and naturally be made to do, many of the most important incidents of the lives of his great contemporaries, Nelson, St. Vincent, and Collingwood, would prove a useful practical manual for the rising generation afloat.

In the meantime, for want of a better, I feel tempted to give a place here to a few words which I wrote in the Bombay Courier, in January 1815, (the first time I ever tried my hand in print,) on the day our excellent commander-in-chief's death was made known at that presidency.

"It is with the deepest regret we announce the death of Vice-admiral Sir Samuel Hood. This officer had raised himself so high in the public estimation by the number and importance of his services—had shewn himself so admirable in the conduct of every enterprise in which he had been engaged—was still so young in years and unbroken in spirit—so thoroughly possessed of the enthusiastic admiration and entire confidence of every man in his profession, that his loss cannot be considered otherwise than as a severe and irreparable misfortune to his country at large; while to those who have enjoyed a nearer view of his excellence, who have served under his command, or have lived in his society, his death is unspeakably afflicting.

"Sir Samuel Hood possessed in a peculiar degree the qualifications which form a great commander: to the calmest and most accurate judgment, he added a presence of mind and rapidity of perception, under all changes of situation, that enabled him to turn every event, which arose even out of unforeseen difficulties and dangers,

to the purpose he had in view. In common with Nelson, he was anxious and impatient while there remained a doubt that the foe could be grappled with; but when the battle once began, his matchless intrepidity, his coolness, and the precision with which all his orders were given, diffused a confidence that was almost uniformly attended by victory.

"But it was not only on these great and trying occasions that he proved himself one of the best officers in the service; for he was eminently skilled in most branches of his profession, whether scientific or practical. He was intimately versed in astronomy, as far, at least, as it is connected with navigation. In geography, ship-building, and fortification, and in many branches of mechanical philosophy, he was also well skilled. He studied, without exception, the languages, and, as far as possible, the laws and customs, of every country he visited. His strong natural taste for scientific inquiry, and an unbounded curiosity to see things with his own eyes, were kept in perpetual action by the belief that these acquisitions of

knowledge might one day prove useful to his country. That they did prove so, those who are acquainted with his life can amply testify. His surveys of the coasts in North America recommended him to early notice as an excellent hydrographer. The bold and original idea of fortifying the Diamond Rock at Martinique, and the immediate execution of that difficult undertaking, shewed him to be a skilful engineer. The extraordinary defence of Salerno, with a few marines opposed to an army—his capture of Tobago, St. Lucia, and Demerara — and his decision after the failure at Teneriffe—all exhibit him as an able general. His gallant capture of a Russian ship of the line, in presence of the Russian fleet; followed by his politic and conciliatory self-denial in sending the flag which he had just taken to the King of Sweden, as if it had been a trophy of that monarch's arms; and, some years before, his communications with the governors and pashas in Syria; together with innumerable other instances, place him high as a statesman and a negotiator.

"The unaffected modesty and simpli-

city of one who had filled so great a space in public admiration, was not the least remarkable part of his character: he had the rare felicity, even to his latest years, to preserve undiminished the vivacity of youth, and that taste for simple pleasures which so seldom survives a mixed and active intercourse with the world. The charm which this happy feeling communicated to his conversation and society, had something in it irresistibly pleasing. He was no less the delight of his friends than the pride of his country."

As it may possibly be imagined that the warmth of juvenile gratitude, combined with strong professional admiration, might have dictated some part of the above eulogium, which was written at a moment of high excitement, I have much satisfaction in adding the deliberate testimony of a perfectly competent authority. The following inscription, written by Sir James Mackintosh for a monument at Bath, is no less creditable to the sagacity and taste of its accomplished author, than it is honourable to the memory of his gallant friend.

Sacred to the Memory
OF
SIR SAMUEL HOOD, BART.
Knight of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath,
And nominated Grand Cross thereof;
Knight of Saint Ferdinand and of Merit;
Knight Grand Cross of the Sword;
Vice-Admiral of the White;
And Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Fleet
In the East Indies.

An Officer of the highest distinction
Among the illustrious Men
Who rendered their own age the brightest period
In the Naval History of their Country:
In whom the same simplicity, calmness, and firmness,
Which gave him full command of his science and skill
In the midst of danger, secured also the rectitude
Of his judgment in its most rapid decisions,
Preserved the integrity and kindness of his nature
Undisturbed amidst the agitations of the world,
And diffused a graceful benignity
On the frank demeanour of his generous profession:
Whose character was an example of the natural union
Of a gallant spirit with a gentle disposition,
And of private affection with public honour:
Whose native modesty was unchanged by renown.

This Column is erected
By the attachment and reverence of British Officers,
Of whom many were his admiring followers
In those awful scenes of war which, while
They called forth the grandest qualities of human nature,
In him, likewise gave occasion for the exercise of its
Most amiable virtues.

Fortunately for me, however, Sir Samuel Hood's death did not occur till more than two years after I reached India. Owing to his kindness, I was enabled to visit the interior of the peninsula of Hindoostan on two different occasions, and likewise to perform a journey of more than a thousand miles on the island of Java. Before touching on these extensive themes, I must give a short account of an alligator-hunt, at a place called Nellivelley, near Trincomalee, got up for the Admiral's express amusement, and performed by a corps of Malays in the British service, the 1st Ceylon Regiment.

Very early in the morning of the 22d of September, the party, which consisted of several ladies and a large proportion of red coats and blue coats, were summoned from their beds to set forth on this expedition. The Admiral, as usual, was up, dressed, and on horseback, long before any of the rest of the company, whom he failed not to scold or to quiz, as they severally crept out of their holes, rubbing their eyes, and very much doubting whether the pleasures of the sport

were likely to compensate for the horrible bore of early rising. In other countries the hour of getting up may be left to choice; in India, when any thing active is to be done, it is a matter of necessity; for after the sun has gained even a few degrees of altitude, the heat and discomfort, as well as the danger of exposure, become so great, that all pleasure is at an end. This circumstance limits the hours of travelling and of exercise in the East very inconveniently, and introduces modifications which help in no slight degree to give a distinctive character to Indian manners.

As there was little risk of being too late on any party of which Sir Samuel Hood took the lead, the day had scarcely begun to dawn when we all cantered up to the scene of action. The ground lay as flat as a marsh for many leagues; here and there the plain was spotted with small stagnant lakes, connected together by sluggish streams, or canals, scarcely moving over beds of mud, between banks fringed with a rank crop of draggled weeds, and giving birth to clouds of mosquitoes. The

chill atmosphere of the morning felt so thick and clammy, it was impossible for the most confident in his own strength and health not to think of agues, jungle fevers, and all the hopeful family of malaria. The hardy native soldiers, who had occupied the ground during the night in despite of the miasmata, were drawn up to receive the Admiral; and a very queer guard of honour they formed. The whole regiment had stripped off their uniform and every other stitch of clothing, save a pair of short trousers, and a kind of sandal. In place of a firelock each man bore in his hand a slender pole about six feet in length, to the extremity of which was attached the bayonet of his musket. His only other weapon was the formidable Malay Crease, a sort of dagger or small edition of the waving two-edged sword with which the angel Michael is armed in Raphael's picture of the Expulsion of our First Parents from Paradise.

Soon after the commander-in-chief came to the ground the regiment was divided into two main parties, and a body of reserves. The principal columns, facing,

one to the right, the other to the left, proceeded to occupy different points in one of those sluggish canals I have already mentioned, connecting the lakes, or pools, scattered over the plain. These detachments, being stationed about a mile from one another, enclosed an interval where, from some peculiar circumstances known only to the Malays (who are passionately fond of this sport), the alligators were sure to be found in great numbers. The troops formed themselves across the canal in three parallel lines, ten or twelve feet apart; but the men in each line stood side by side, merely leaving room enough to wield their pikes. The canal may have been about four or five feet deep in the middle of the stream, if stream it may be called, which scarcely moved at all. The colour of the water when undisturbed was a shade between ink and coffee; but no sooner had the triple line of Malays set themselves in motion, and the mud got stirred up, than the consistence and colour of the fluid became like those of pease-soup.

On every thing being reported ready,

the soldiers planted their pikes before them in the mud, and, if I recollect right, each man crossing his neighbour's weapon, and at the word 'march' away they all started in full cry, sending forth a shout, or war-whoop, sufficient to curdle the blood of those on land, whatever effect it may have had on the inhabitants of the deep. As the two divisions of the invading army, starting from opposite ends of the canal, gradually approached each other in pretty close column, screaming and yelling with all their souls, and striking their pikes deep in the slime before them, the startled animals naturally retired towards the unoccupied centre. Generally speaking, the alligators, or crocodiles (for I believe they are very nearly the same), had sense enough to turn their long tails upon their assailants, and to scuttle off as fast as they could towards the middle part of the canal. But every now and then, one of the terrified monsters, either confused by the sound, or provoked by the prick of a pike, or mystified by the turbid nature of the stream, floundered backwards, and, by retreating in the wrong direction, broke

through the first, second, and even third line of pikes. This, which would have been any thing but an amusement to unpractised hands, was the perfection of sport to the delighted Malays. A double circle of soldiers was speedily formed round the wretched aquatic who had presumed to pass the barrier. By means of well-directed thrusts with numberless bayonets, and the pressure of some dozens of feet, the poor brute was often fairly driven beneath his native mud. When once there, his enemies half choked and half spitted him, till at last they put an end to his miserable days in regions quite out of sight, and in a manner as inglorious as can well be conceived.

For the poor denizens of the pool, indeed, it was the choice between Scylla and Charybdis with a vengeance; and I am half ashamed to acknowledge the savage kind of delight with which we stood on the banks, and saw the distracted creatures rushing from one attack right into the jaws of another. The Malays, in their ecstasy, declared that the small fry from one side rushed down the throats of

the big ones whom they met flying in the opposite direction. But this seems very questionable, though positively asserted by the enraptured natives, who redoubled their shouts as the plot thickened, and the two bodies of troops, marching from opposite quarters, drew within a hundred yards of each other. The intermediate space was now pretty well crowded with alligators, swimming about in the utmost terror; at times diving below, and anon shewing their noses well plastered with mud high above the surface of the dirty stream; or occasionally making a furious bolt in sheer despair right at the phalanx of Malays. On these occasions half-a-dozen of the soldiers were often upset, and their pikes either broken or twisted out of their hands, to the infinite amusement of their companions, who speedily closed up the broken ranks, as if their comrades had been shot down in battle. The killed were none, but the wounded many; yet no man flinched in the least.

The perfection of the sport appeared to consist in detaching a single alligator from

the rest, surrounding and attacking him separately, and spearing him till he was almost dead. The Malays then, by main strength, forked him aloft, over their heads, on the end of a dozen pikes, and, by a sudden jerk, pitched the conquered monster far on the shore. As the alligators are amphibious, they kept to the water no longer than they found they had an advantage in that element; but as the period of the final mélée approached, on the two columns of their enemy closing up, the monsters lost all discipline, floundered, and ploutered up the weedy banks, scuttling away to the right and left, helter-skelter. "Sauve qui peut!" seemed to be the fatal watch-word for their total rout. That prudent cry would, no doubt, have saved many of them, as it has saved other vanquished forces, had not the Malays judiciously placed beforehand their reserve on each side of the river to receive the distracted fugitives, who, bathed in mud, and half dead with terror, but still in a prodigious fury, dashed off at right angles from the canal, in hopes of gaining the shelter of a swampy pool overgrown with

reeds and bulrushes, but which, alas for most of the poor beasts, they were never doomed to reach. The concluding battle between these retreating and desperate alligators and the Malays of the reserve was formidable enough. Indeed, had not the one party been fresh, the other exhausted, one confident, the other broken in spirit, it is quite possible that the crocodiles might have worsted the pirates, as the Malays are called in every other part of the world but the East, where they are generally admitted to be as good a set of people as any of their neighbours.

It is needless to say, that while all this was going on, our gallant Admiral, Sir Samuel Hood, was a pretty busy spectator. His eagle eye glanced along the canal, and at a moment took in the whole purpose of the campaign. As the war advanced, and sundry small affairs of outposts took place, we could see his face flushing with delight. But when the first alligator was cast headlong and gasping at his feet, pierced with at least twenty pike wounds, and bristled with half a dozen fragments of these weapons fractured in

the onslaught, the whole plain rung with his exclamation of boyish delight. When the detachments closed in upon their prey, and every moment gave birth to some new prodigy of valour, or laid a whole line of the Malay soldiers prostrate on the muddy stream, like so many nine-pins, I verily believe, that if none of his own people had been present, the Admiral would have seized a pike himself, and jumped into the thickest of the fight, boots, sword, cocked hat, and all! As it was, he kept himself close to the banks, and rivalled the best Malay amongst them in yelling and cheering on the forces to their duty. This intensity of eagerness had well nigh proved rather awkward for his Excellency's dignity, if not his safety; for, in spite of the repeated warnings of the English officers of the regiment, who knew from former hunts what was sure to happen eventually, the Admiral persisted in approaching the edge of the canal as the final act of the alligators' tragedy commenced. And as we, his poor officers, were, of course, obliged to follow our chief into any danger, a considerable

party of us found ourselves rather awkwardly placed between the reserve of Malays already spoken of and the canal, just as the grand rush took place at the close of the battle. If the infuriated crocodiles had only known what they were about, and had then brought their long sharp snouts, and still harder tails, into play, several of His Majesty's officers might have chanced to find themselves in a scrape. As it was we were extremely near being wedged in between the animals' noses and the pikes and creases of the wild Malays. It was difficult, indeed, to say which of the two looked at that moment the most savage — the triumphant natives or the flying troop of alligators wallopping away from the water. Many on both sides were wounded, and all, without exception, covered with slime and weeds. Some of our party were actually pushed over, and fell plump in the mud, to the very provoking and particular amusement of the delighted Admiral, whose superior adroitness enabled him to avoid such an undignified catastrophe, by jumping first on one side and

then on the other, in a manner which excited both the mirth and the alarm of his company; though, of course, we took good care rather to laugh with our commander-in-chief than at him.

I forget the total number of alligators killed, but certainly there could not have been fewer than thirty or forty. The largest measured ten feet in length, and four feet girth, the head being exactly two feet long. Besides these great fellows, we caught, alive, a multitude of little ones, nine inches long, many of which we carried back to Trincomalee. Half-a-dozen of these were kept in tubs of water at the Admiralty House for many days; the rest being carried on board, became great favourites amongst the sailors, whose queer taste in the choice of pets has already been noticed.

# CHAPTER VII.

## PIC-NIC PARTY IN THE CAVE OF ELEPHANTA.

From Trincomalee we sailed back again to Bombay, the only port in India possessing docks sufficiently capacious, and a harbour commodious enough for so large a ship as the Illustrious. This was the second visit I paid to that most interesting of all the presidencies. On two subsequent occasions I had even better opportunities of making myself acquainted with its merits; for I had by that time made two extensive journeys across the country, and, of course, become more or less familiar with various oriental topics. Nevertheless, Bombay continues to hold its ground as the place best worth seeing of any spot I have visited in India.

The fascinations of society at Bombay, in the particular circle to whose intimacy I had the happiness to be admitted

on these occasions, were certainly very great; and, in a pretty extensive experience since, I have hardly found them matched. To think of studying, to any good purpose, the mouldering antiquities of the Hindoos, or of speculating with spirit on the manners and customs of the existing generation of the natives, while the conversation of such specimens of my own country folks lay within reach, was totally out of the question. And this feeling being shared by all the party, it was considered a most brilliant idea to unite the two sources of interest in one expedition.

"Why should we not," said one of the ladies, (who, alas! is now no more,) "why should we not make a regular expedition in a body to Elephanta? not for a mere visit of an hour or two, but to remain a week or ten days, during which we might examine the caves at leisure, draw them, describe them, and, in short, perform such a course of public antiquarian services as were never before undertaken?"

The notion was eagerly caught up by

the company; one of whom, an officer of the engineers, called out,

"I'll send over a couple of tents, to be pitched before the mouth of the cave; one for the ladies, the other for the attendants and kitchen, while the gentlemen may pick out the softer bits of pavement within the cave to spread their beds on."

"I'll send cooks!" cried another.

"I'll be the caterer of our mess," shouted a third, "and take care of the commissariat department."

"And I," said a gentleman, who alone of all the party now lingers on the spot, though it is nearly twenty years since those merry days, "I shall see that you have wine enough, and plenty of Hodgson's pale ale."

All were eager to be of use, and nothing was thought of but making arrangements. We hired Bunder boats, or native launches, to transport the heavy baggage, the tents, tables, and victuals; while it fell to my lot to provide smaller and faster-moving boats, called gigs, for the accommodation of the ladies. We passed over in detachments; some early in the morn-

ing; and others, whose business kept them in the fort, later in the afternoon; but in the course of a couple of days we were all established close to the scene of operations, and ready to commence working in earnest.

When I come to describe the method of travelling in India, it will not seem surprising how readily we made ourselves comfortably at home on the island of Elephanta. Most of the gentlemen slept actually within the cave, either boxed up in their palankeens, or on mattrasses, which they spread in the little niches or chapels carved out of the living rock on the sides of the cavern.

The first day was passed in rambling up and down the aisles, if they may be so called, of this wonderful cathedral, which the Hindoos of past ages had hewn out of the solid stone. The sculptures on the wall being varied in every possible way, within the fantastic limits of their extravagant theology, the effect was almost bewildering to those who viewed this wild scene for the first time. Even to those who had witnessed it once or

twice before, it was impressive in a degree very difficult to describe. The imagination of a new comer like myself was carried back irresistibly to dark periods of traditional history, where every thing appeared nearly as vague and indistinct as the recollection of a fairy tale. To those, again, who had studied the subject long, and made themselves acquainted not only with the religion of the natives, but with their peculiar style of representing their gods, the cave of Elephanta offered a rich feast of research; and there could be heard from time to time, loud expressions of delight from these adepts in the science of oriental antiquarianism, when they lighted upon any group particularly fertile in characteristic attributes of the deities they were in quest of.

Towards the end of the day, the party, which had hung together more or less during the morning, fell to pieces. Some of the gentlemen straggled into the jungle to catch a shot at a parrot or a monkey; while others, exhausted with the closeness of the cave, and the labour of climbing up to examine the details, stretched them-

selves in the shade, under the fly, as it is called (or roof), of a large tent, beneath which the air passed freely along, in consequence of the canvass walls being removed. For my own part, I could hardly detach myself for more than a few minutes at a time from the temple, but wandered backwards and forwards, with a restless kind of impatience of my own ignorance, which was rather aggravated than relieved by the snatches of explanation won from more experienced orientalists. During the whole time of dinner I could think of nothing but the indistinct figures on the dark walls which enclosed us on three sides; and I stole away from table as soon as I could, to regale myself with this antiquarian banquet, till the night closed in. I then tried a walk in the open air, but felt the chill land-wind breathing through the damp underwood afford only a deceitful kind of refreshment which soon passed away, and left my brow throbbing and feverish with the intense excitement of the day. My companions declared themselves sick of the cave; and as I could talk of nothing else, I was no society for them, nor they

for me, so off I slipped very early to my cot, spread in one of the little recesses already mentioned, lying on the left or eastern side of the principal excavation. Without taking off my clothes, I threw myself down, and in the course of a few minutes, as I imagined, fell asleep.

It is the fashion in India to burn a lamp in every sleeping apartment; not a vulgar rushlight, enclosed, as in England, in a wretched case of perforated tin, like a stable lantern, but a small bright flame rising from a classical-shaped bronze vessel, worthy of Etruria, filled with oil expressed either from the cocoa-nut or the sesamé, and as clear as crystal. What is the origin of this oriental custom of burning a light in the bed-chamber, I could never learn exactly. Some persons allege that it affords a protection from the snakes which are said to prevail in those regions; though I never had the fortune to see a single one of them in all the different journeys I made across the continent and islands of India. Whatever be the cause, the practice is so universal, that our servants, who in that country are the most perfect

machines imaginable, continued, even in the cave, to place lights by our bed-sides, as a matter of course. A thousand such lamps, however, as were flickering on the stone floor of our huge apartment, would have served very feebly to illuminate even the small portion of the gorgeous temple which I then occupied.

After lying asleep for some time, as I thought, I either awoke, or believed I did, and, on looking round, was not a little startled to find myself alone in such a strange place, of the real nature of which I had but an obscure recollection. The solitary lamp appeared to have gained far more power, for the whole cave now seemed as light as if the sun had been shining into it. On turning round to discover where I could possibly have got to, and looking up, I beheld, with a feeling of indistinct alarm, and of much uncertainty as to the reality or visionary nature of what I was gazing upon, a huge figure, half male and half female. I remembered, that during the morning we had been told by one of the learned folks of our party, that in the Hindoo mythology such a monster was to

be found, with the jaw-breaking name of Ardhanar-Ishwar. As I strained my eyes to examine this fantastic figure, I asked myself over and over again whether I could be awake or was still asleep. The foaming cups of Hodgson's pale ale, and the ruby-coloured nectar of Château Margaux, at a pretty late dinner, may possibly have helped this mystification, while they certainly took nothing from the interest of the dream, if dream it were. The gigantic image at which I was looking, though at first it seemed detached and in motion, appeared, on closer examination, to be sculptured in high relief on the hard rock of the mountain. This strange hermaphrodite seemed gifted with four arms (which is one of those clumsy devices by which the Hindoo artists seek to convey an idea of power), and standing not quite erect, but inclining a little, with the foremost of its right arms resting on the hump of the famous Nundi, the bull of Shiva, on which it is the fancy of this double-sexed god occasionally to ride. The right side of the figure appeared to be male, the left female; and it is singular how much

this distinction was preserved in all respects. The two sides of the cap seemed different, the right presenting the crescent of Shiva, and the female side of the cap being trimmed with curls rising over it, while the male side appeared to be ornamented by a string of knobs, or beads. The ear-rings were different, and on the left, or female side, there hung two; one of them a *bali*, or jewel for the upper part of the ear, the other a large ring; while the male side carried one only, and the ear being lengthened and stretched downwards towards the shoulder. The armlets, also, appeared different; the two right or male arms being both encompassed by a thin metal bar, unjoined at the ends (a common ornament in the East), and the left, or female arms, encircled by a broader ornament. Each of the right-hand wrists was clasped by one ornament, the left by two bracelets. The inner right hand, which was in good preservation, bore a ring on the little finger. The inner left hand, which was also unbroken, carried two rings; one on the little finger, the other on the middle finger. The

inner right hand held the snake called *cobra di capella*, the head of which rose aloft as if listening to the figure. The outer right hand rested on the horn of the bull, while the elbow was placed on the hump. Both the serpent and the bull Nundi marked out the god Shiva. From the left breast of this curious figure being that of a female, and from its being single, the idea has arisen that the intention was to represent an Amazon. But this is clearly a mistake. And indeed the same distinction of the sexes observed between the appearance of the right and left sides of the principal figure extend to all the others in this very curious compartment of the cave; those attendants on the right hand of Ardnari belonging to Shiva, those on the left to his wife Parvati. Long before I could get half through this catalogue of attributes of the celebrated double-sexed Hindoo deity, the lamp began once more to burn blue, the figures on the wall faded gradually away from my sight, and, in spite of every effort to continue the observations, I dropped again on my pillow fast asleep. During the whole of our

stay at Elephanta, I was never afterwards troubled with such visions, for the labours and amusements, to say nothing of the festivities of our glorious and patent pic-nic, disposed all the party to good sound sleep.

At first we set rather confusedly to work, without much discipline in our examination of the cave; but as the task was extensive, and we had undertaken to do it properly, some systematic arrangement became absolutely necessary. Mr. William Erskine had agreed, with the assistance of his friends, to draw up the account of the cave, and we placed ourselves under his orders as the captain, or chief. The description which was produced by this united service, is by far the most exact and minute that has ever been made of Elephanta, and was afterwards published in the Bombay Transactions, vol. I. These details undoubtedly owe most of their interest to the skill and taste with which the accomplished writer has arranged them; but as he always very disinterestedly considered his account as the joint property of the party who aided his researches, I

have not scrupled, in speaking of the caves, to borrow freely from materials which I helped to collect.

His first assistant (the original proposer of the scheme) was a lady of high qualifications as an artist; not a mere fashionable screen-sketcher and murderer of the picturesque, but a regular painter, trained by long study, and under the influence of good taste. It is grievous to think that so much worth, and beauty, and talents, and such extensive knowledge, should so soon have sunk into the grave; and the smart is, indeed, very bitter which accompanies such recollections, when we feel that they are taken away from us for ever. Perhaps there has very seldom existed any person whose loss has been so truly regretted by the circle of her friends, on account of the hopeless difficulty of supplying her place. As it was at all times a piece of good fortune to find one's self in the same party with this charming person, even when it was left to the chapter of accidents to provide opportunities of conversation, it was considered the greatest of all possible catches

to secure her companionship for so many days, and in such a place as Elephanta.

Our master of the ceremonies very judiciously fixed his principal hand and eye before the celebrated triple head, the most remarkable by far in all the cave. A large mat was spread on the ground, with a table and drawing apparatus in the middle of it, near which there was left ample room for the fair artist's host of merry children to romp and roll about on. Near this spot was also placed the easy chair of her eccentric, but accomplished and highly-informed husband, who refused to undertake any part of the hard work, but quizzed the whole of us unmercifully for the useless, or, as he called it, idle labour we were bestowing on the cave. This gentleman, who was a great experimental agriculturist, as well as theoretical political economist, in short, what may be called a philosopher of all work, was worth any money on such a pic-nic as this. His knowledge of the world, and his talents in the art of conversation, though of the first order, were still subordinate to the boundless ingenuity of his fancy, by which any

thing and every thing could be made to fit the most incongruous phases of his arguments. If in his whole composition there had been a spark of ill-nature, such singular powers of adapting facts to fancies, and such earnestness in driving his points home, would have rendered him the most supreme of all bores, in or out of a cave; but, fortunately for the Elephanta company, the matchless sweetness of his disposition, his thorough good-breeding, his delight in all the amiable parts of our nature, and his constant readiness to oblige and be obliged, carved him out as the beau idéal of an ally on such an occasion. Many a time and oft the old cavern rung with peals of jolly mirth, and called us from our various holes and corners, to enjoy the witty sallies of this most amusing of persons, whose endless good-humoured jokes, and queer views of things, were always cracking and sparkling round the drawing party before the principal compartment of the temple.

We took our breakfast and dinner at a long table, spread much nearer the mouth of the cave, that we might enjoy, not only

the light of day, and the cool clear air of the sea-breeze, but such peeps of the distant ghauts and other parts of the landscape, seen across the upper parts of the beautiful bay, as we could catch through the foliage. Of course, we kept far enough back to escape the fierce glare of the sky, which in those climates sends down, especially when it is clouded, the treacherous influence of the sun's in-direct rays in a manner almost as trouble-some, though not quite so fatal, as his full blaze of light. It may be worth while to mention, that we never allowed beef in any shape or way to approach our board; for although the temple of Elephanta has for centuries been desecrated, and, conse-quently, is no longer used by the Hindoos, there still hangs about this splendid monu-ment a certain degree of sanctity in the eyes of the poor natives, which it would be cruel not to respect. Accordingly, one of the most beautiful rounds of beef that ever was pickled, received orders to march off the island, without any consideration for the wants and wishes of two or three gourmands of the party, whose self-denial

proved no match for their appetite, and whose respect for these imaginary feelings of the natives became equal to zero, as the algebraists say. It afforded some consolation, however, to these disappointed members of the pic-nic, to observe the boundless delight with which our native attendants carried away the unspeakable abomination of the round of beef. The cow and bull, in every shape, are held sacred by the Hindoos; and even those castes who object to no other meat, would much rather die than taste that of an ox.

I was once gravely assured, that in the penal codes of Hindoostan, it is set down as a crime of greater magnitude for a man to jump over a cow than to kill his own mother!—a strangely fantastic classification, surely. Until I heard of this singular law, I certainly had no more thoughts of committing one of these crimes than the other; but, ever after receiving this curious piece of information, I could never see a cow reposing in a meadow without feeling a perverse desire to make a run and leap over her. I actually ventured to try the experiment once in the

Green Park, and was very nearly paying the penalty of my Hindoo sacrilege, for the good lady (I mean the cow), astonished at the proceeding, tossed up her head, and all but spitted me on her horns.

Since the above statement was written, I have discovered that I was entirely in error as to the Hindoo superstition above alluded to. Nevertheless, I let the paragraph stand, as it affords a pretty fair specimen of the manner in which a raw traveller, poking about greedily and indiscreetly in search of what he calls characteristic information, may sometimes manage to be taken in. A quizzical friend of mine at Bombay, observing my head half turned with the glare of Oriental novelties, and bewildered in the intricacies of the Hindoo mythology, thought he would experiment on the traveller's credulity, by inventing and palming off upon me the above fiction about the crime of leaping over a cow. Before presenting to the public, however, so very curious a piece of superstition, I thought it but prudent to make further inquiries as to the fact, and only then discovered that,

for the last twenty years, I have been going on relating, with all the confidence imaginable—as a solemn point of Hindoo law—the mere figment of a mercurial cadet's imagination. Verily, if the cow in the Green Park had given me a graze with her horn, it would have served me right!

Our antiquarian commander-in-chief, after a cabinet council held daily at the breakfast-table, distributed us in different parts of the cave; one gentleman being appointed to count and measure the columns, another to ascertain the height of the ceiling, while a third, a very exact and trust-worthy assistant, was ordered to construct a ground-plan of the whole excavation. The gentleman named as the chief engineer in this important department of our researches was a medical man in the Company's establishment, who had recently come down to the presidency from the interior, where he had been stationed for some years. He was a single man at the period in question; but most of his associates in this delightful Elephanta pic-nic had the pleasure of attending his marriage-feast not long afterwards.

The fair damsel of his choice had come out to India to join the family of a married sister; but on reaching Bombay, it appeared that both that lady and her husband had died; and although she knew of several other relations in India, they either resided at remote, up-country stations, or were not known to the people at the presidency. On learning these particulars, the captain of the ship in which the lady had taken her passage found himself in a strange puzzle. All his other passengers had landed, and were safe and snug in the bosoms of their respective families, while the disconsolate young woman alluded to remained alone in the empty cabin. The captain could hardly land her like a bale of goods on the beach, neither could he keep her on board; while the poor girl herself, totally ignorant of the ways of the East, could give no opinion as to what ought to be done. The captain, therefore, as in other cases of difficulty, held a consultation with his chief officer, a rough-spun business-like personage, who at once said,

"Go to the governor, sir; he's as good-

hearted an old gentleman as ever stepped, and it is his proper business to give directions in such a case. At all events, if you report it regularly to his excellency, the affair cannot rest, and it will be off your shoulders."

"Man the boat! man the boat!" exclaimed the delighted skipper; then turning to the 'maiden all forlorn,' and assuring her that every thing would soon be settled to her satisfaction, he hurried on shore.

The governor, Sir Evan Nepean, though he had been many years secretary of the Admiralty (a tolerably puzzling birth, I guess!), was yet rather taken aback by the captain's communication.

"I'll see about it," he said, though not knowing for the life of him what on earth to do with the lady, who, being young, pretty, and accomplished, might have felt herself rather awkward in the government-house—for Lady Nepean had remained in England. The captain made his escape as soon as he heard the governor adopt the responsibility, by declaring he would think of it.

"You'll see," said the mate to the captain, "that it will all go right by and by; this is not a country in which young ladies, so good and so bonny as our poor passenger, are likely to be left long adrift."

He was right in his conjecture; for the governor, having pondered a little on the matter, sent for a gentleman, not of the East India Company's service, but a resident merchant, at the head of a great house of agency in Bombay, one of the most benevolent of mortal men, and certainly one of the kindest and most generally useful in that country of kind offices and long purses.

"Mr. Money," said Sir Evan to the man of rupees, "will you oblige me by taking a young lady to live with your family till she can hear from, or be heard of by some of her friends, as those to whom she has come out are either dead or not forthcoming?"

"I shall be delighted to be of use to any friend of yours, Sir Evan," was, of course, the ready and sincere reply; and in less than half an hour the mate and

the captain of the ship were congratulating each other on having got a clear ship at last!

What might have been this very interesting young person's fate had she, on her first arrival, found all things as she expected, I cannot pretend to say. Fortune regulates these matters in such queer ways, that our calculations are often sadly put out; but nothing could have been more agreeable than the issue of this apparently untoward adventure. Our engineer of the cave was a friend of the wealthy citizen with whom the governor had deposited the fair lady who had been thrown on his hands by the captain of the ship, and he happened to be asked to dinner there one day. He likewise happened to sit down next the pretty damsel in question; and all this (though, I presume, purely the work of chance) seemed natural enough. The worthy doctor, however, was what is called a 'determined bachelor,' one of those knowing personages who, for reasons of their own, seem resolved never to marry, and yet who, perchance, may be just on the verge of that awful catastrophe,

though little dreaming that the noose which is dangling in festoons on their neck will, by the fall of some unexpected 'drop,' become in a moment as tight as any rib of steel in the frame-work of their fate. So, at least, it proved with our Elephanta Benedict. In a happy hour he sat down to dinner, but, it is said, did not even look at his neighbour; for he had accidentally caught a glimpse of her figure and drapery, which, though he knew not why, had somewhat shaken his antimatrimonial fortitude, and made his pulse beat five or six throbs faster in the minute than when he first entered the room. Nothing was said by either party; for, by some accident, no regular introduction had taken place between the gentleman and the pretty stranger, and even their names were respectively unknown. At length, the master of the house, recollecting this omission, introduced them to each other, and then called out,

"Doctor, won't you ask your neighbour to take a glass of wine?"

Both names were very remarkable, and might, perhaps, under any circumstances,

have engaged notice; but upon this occasion the effect was striking enough; for the lady's father had been a great friend and patron of the doctor some years before, and she had often heard him spoken of at home, as a person in whom the family were much interested. On hearing their names mentioned, therefore, both the lady and the gentleman started—turned quickly round—their eyes met—the little God laughed—and on that day three weeks they were man and wife!

"But this," to use the words of dear old Robinson Crusoe, "is a digression, and I must not crowd this part of my story with an account of lesser things, but return to the main thread." Our party, then, in the Elephanta cave, consisted, besides our chief artist and her spouse, of two or three other ladies and gentlemen, extremely agreeable persons, one of these being a perfect treasure on such an expedition, from the extent and variety of her resources, and the delightful simplicity with which the whole were placed at the disposal of the company. There was one gentleman particularly well versed

in Indian, as well as European astronomy, if we may distinguish these things, and our investigations in the cave often rendered his interpretations of much value. We had also with us a very learned person who had come to India as a missionary, but whose zeal in the cause of conversion had gradually evaporated, while in its place there grew up an intense curiosity to investigate the literature and antiquities of the Hindoos. He was just the hand for us, and formed a good pendant to another and still more agreeable companion, who took an equal interest in the modern customs of the natives, chiefly in what related to their religious ceremonies, their costumes, and their domestic amusements. His knowledge of details we found of great use in deciphering and describing the groups of figures sculptured on the face of the rock, in the different compartments of the cave.

Lastly, we enjoyed the society of a gentleman of the civil service, high in office under the East India Company; and the only drawback which we experienced in his case, was the necessity he was under

of going across after breakfast to Bombay, where his business kept him till an hour or so before dinner. A shout of joy from old and young always hailed his most welcome return; and as the time approached, many an anxious eye was turned towards the mouth of the cave, happy to be the first to catch a glimpse of his tall figure on the bright sky. As I name no names, and make no allusions but such as will be understood by those only whom they will not offend, I may be allowed to say, in passing, that in beating up the world since, pretty briskly, I have rarely, if ever, met, even separately, persons so estimable, in all respects, as many of those who were here collected in the Elephanta cave, expressly to make themselves agreeable to one another. There can be no doubt, in most cases, and little doubt in any case, that time, distance, and totally different duties and occupations in life, estrange man from man, and by gradually diluting friendships into acquaintances, eventually obliterate, or nearly so, all recollection of the closest intimacies. But there are in-

stances, and this Elephanta pic-nic is one of them, in which, by a strange and pleasing mental process, the recollection is not only kept warm, but is even improved in its temperature by time. At all events, the more I have seen of the rest of the world, the more sensible I have become to the merits of the delightful friendships of that day, and the more truly I have felt attached to them, although the correspondence which has since passed between us hardly deserves the name.

It makes me sigh, indeed, to think how busy death has been with some of the members of that party, whom the survivors could least have spared, and to look round and see how widely all the rest are now scattered over the different quarters of the globe. In the course of my wandering life, indeed, it has happened to me to meet most of them again, and several of them more than once. The extent, indeed, as well as variety of opportunities I have enjoyed of forming valuable acquaintances has been so great, and the loss of friends by death so frequent, that I now find, to whatever direction I

turn, or to whatever fragment of my life I apply myself for topics of interest, or however brilliant the scene was at the time, the view is now almost always sobered, or mellowed, I will not call it "sicklied o'er" with the pale cast of thought, consequent upon the remembrance of these losses. So much is this the case, that I should certainly feel some reluctance in thus disturbing the ashes of my early expectations, if there had not happily arisen out of these promises, in most cases, a far more enduring performance than even I, sanguine as I have ever been, had ventured to hope for. I have read much and heard more of the disappointments to which all men are subjected in this matter; but I can only say, for myself, that in this much-abused lottery of human life I never drew a false friend.

Of the Elephanta party, one only of the whole number still hovers round the neighbourhood of the cave; another has been settled for nearly twenty years at Calcutta, and I had the pleasure of beating up his quarters on returning from

China some years afterwards; a third took flight, strangely enough, exactly in the opposite direction, and exchanged the luxuries of the glorious and graceful eastern world for the raw materials of the west, and actually 'located' himself and his family in North America. I had an opportunity of visiting him, too; but such a contrast! "Every man to his liking," certainly; but how any mortal that has enjoyed the pleasures of an old country, and possesses taste enough to appreciate its innumerable advantages, can permanently reside in a new one, is to me absolutely marvellous! Most of those clever transatlantic writers, who delight us so much by their works of fancy, and who cry up with increasing emphasis the charms of their own country, seem to take exceeding good care, I observe, rarely to verify their theories on this score by any considerable touch of their practice. They affect to scorn the testimony of travellers who report different things of their country, while they themselves (just as we Scotchmen—I must confess—are apt enough to do, in a similar case,) take the

best possible means of substantiating the fidelity of such depreciating statements, by seldom returning home again!

The method we adopted for investigating and describing the cave, was to divide the labour in some cases, and in others to combine our exertions, but, in all parts of the task, to make the work as amusing as possible. While our principal artist was engaged at the proper distance in making the beautiful and accurate sketches which have since been engraved for the Transactions of the Bombay Society, the chronicler of the cave proceeded, with one or two of the party as his aides-de-camp, to examine the sculptures more narrowly; and having continued his investigation till he was satisfied that nothing had been passed over, he sat down at a little table, carried about for that purpose from place to place, and there, on the very spot, wrote an account of what was before him. When the description was completed, a kind of general council, or "committee of the whole cave," were assembled, to report upon the result. Some of the party, including, of course, the

ladies, sat round the writer, while others, assisted by ladders, climbed up to the top of the carvings, in order to detect any inaccuracy in the description. Mr. Erskine then commenced reading his own account, while the rest stood by in readiness to check whatever might seem to require correction. On the occurrence of any remark in the description which, to some of us, did not appear to be borne out by the facts, an immediate halt was requested; and the point being diligently re-examined, the writing was either confirmed, or altered till it met the approbation of the whole host of critics. This method of proceeding gave wonderful animation to what, under ordinary circumstances, might have been considered dry details. It also put all the investigating detachments to their mettle; generally furnished abundant matter for discussion; and often set us off upon fresh and amusing courses of inquiry.

It likewise not infrequently happened, that where a piece of sculpture was unfortunately much decayed by time, or injured by the hands of wanton heretics, or chanced to be placed far back in the cave,

there arose no small difficulty in coming to any rational conclusion about the matter. Where the cruel hammer of some meddling geological or antiquarian traveller had driven away two or three out of half-a-dozen of a poor Hindoo god's arms, or crushed down his sacred nose, there remained for us little or no resource except that atrabilarious process of soundly anathematising the delinquent or delinquents unknown. But where there existed any remedy within reach, we spared no pains to throw light on the subject. This, in fact, (without any pun,) was our chief desideratum; and the scientific heads of the company were put in requisition to devise methods for illuminating the dark parts of the temple. The first and most obvious plan was to stick a number of little bits of wax taper all over and round those portions of the sculptures which were under immediate investigation. But this was found to be troublesome, in more respects than one. The wax melted and ran down, and the corner of the cave in which we were working either became too choky by the smoke and heat, or the lights burned

down and required to be shifted. This plan, therefore, was only resorted to when the other methods I am about to describe failed in effecting the purpose.

The sun at no time of the day shone full into the cave, which faces due north, but we found that by borrowing the looking-glasses from the lady's tent we could catch his rays, and send them to the very back of the excavation, and thence, by means of other mirrors, could polarise our light in such a way as even to make it turn corners, and fall on spots where, probably, never sunlight rested before. The ecstasy of the natives on beholding the success of this manœuvre was so great, that some of them expressed themselves highly flattered by the honours paid to their long-degraded deities. On hearing this stated by the Hindoos, one of the wits of our party remarked, that if these said gods, Messrs. Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma, should get their heads above water again, they could, of course, do no less than remember that we noticed them in their adversity; a stale Joe Miller, indeed, as every one must remember who

has kissed the bronze toe of St. Peter in the Vatican—erst old Jupiter of the Capitol; but it made the natives laugh heartily when it was interpreted to them.

Another device of the same kind assisted our researches not a little, and was of still greater service to us in dissipating nearly all the gloom of the cave, thus helping to keep up that air of cheerfulness which is of such vast importance to the success of every undertaking in this world, great or small. The tea-urn having been capsised on the breakfast-table one morning, the servants naturally spread the table-cloth in the sun on the shrubs before the cave. The immediate effect of this mass of white was to lighten up every thing within; and the hint once given, we lost no time in expanding it, by hoisting half-a-dozen other cloths, at the proper angles, till a bright yet soft glow of light was thrown upon the principal figure of all, at the top of the great division of the cave. As soon as this effect was perceived, all other work was suspended, and every one flocked round the commander of the party while he drew forth his scroll,

and, without any flourish of trumpets, proceeded nearly as follows:

"The figure that faces the principal entrance is the most remarkable in this excavation, and has given rise to numberless conjectures and theories. It is a gigantic bust, representing some three-headed being, or three heads of some being to whom the temple may be supposed to be dedicated. Dr. William Hunter, in the Archæologia, vol. VII. p. 292, describes this bust as having four heads, one being hid behind. It is to be observed, however, that no traces of the fourth head appear, it being left entirely to the imagination to supply it, as well as the fifth on the top, if the bust be Shiva's. Some writers have imagined that it is what they have called the Hindu Trinity of Bramha, Visnu, and Shiva, and very strange historical conclusions have been drawn from this hypothesis. The Hindu Trimurti, or Trinity, as it has been called, does not occupy a very remarkable place in the theology of the Brahmins. The word Trimurti means *three-forms*.

"The three-headed figure at Elephanta

represents the deity only down to the breast, or a third-length. One head faces the spectator, another looks to the right, and a third to the left; the fourth may be imagined to be concealed behind. It will give some idea of its bulk to mention, that from the top of the cap of the middle figure to the bottom of the image is seventeen feet ten inches, while the horizontal curved line, embracing the three heads at the height of the eyes and touching the eyes, is twenty-two feet nine inches. All these figures, it may be mentioned, are carved out of the solid rock, which is a coarse-grained dark-gray basaltic formation, called by the geologists trachyte."

When the describer had written so far, he paused, and asked our opinion; upon which there was a general demand upon him to insert something by which his future readers might be informed who, as well as what, this extraordinary figure was?—which of the various Hindoo gods it was intended to represent? Thus prompted, he went on again.

"All the Hindu deities have particular symbols by which they may be distin-

guished; much as the family of an European may be discovered by its armorial bearings. Unfortunately, many of the figures of Elephanta are too much mutilated to allow us to resort with certainty to this criterion for distinguishing them; and this is particularly the case with the principal figure. The face which looks to the east, or right hand (the spectator's left), is evidently Shiva or Mahadeo, whose principal face, by the rules laid down for fixing images in Hindu temples, must always face the east, while Yoni generally turns to the north. In his hand he holds the cobra di capella, which twists itself round his arm, and rears its head so as to look him in the face. His countenance seems to bear the marks of habitual passion."

While our accomplished antiquary was writing, the rest of the pic nickers were scrambling about the heads, like schoolboys on a haystack, till once more called upon to listen. The above lines (now quoted, as I may mention once for all, from the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society,) were read, and agreed

to, except some remarks towards the end. One of the company, whose name will appear by and by, and who was perched on the top of a ladder resting on the tip of Shiva's handsome Roman nose, called out that these last words were a scandalous libel on the worthy god, whose expression was eminently placid, evincing any thing but habitual passion.

"Well," said the narrator, "what do you make of that swelling between the eye-brows? Surely that indicates the corrugator muscle in action, or, in other words, shews that your friend Mr. Shiva is in a rage?"

"I admit no such thing," said the objector, who from his garb appeared to be nautical, "I see no wrinkling of the brow: after a long examination, I cannot help thinking that the protuberance on this brow is intended for the third eye of the god: it is entirely raised above the general surface of the brow without any indenture, such as that which occurs on the wrinkled forehead of Passion. The whole skin of this figure's brow is smooth, except this oval protuberance, which no-

wise resembles that of Bhyrava, as you called the figure we were examining yesterday in the north-east compartment north of the Lingam, where the brow is marked by deep furrows highly expressive of passion."

Upon this objection being started, the whole expedition assembled as near the disputed point as possible; a temporary scaffold was rigged up for the ladies on a level with Shiva's eyes; and no Lilliputians ever investigated the countenance of honest Gulliver with more interest than we did that of the no less wonderful Trimurti. A couple of additional mirrors were put in requisition to fling a strong light into the cave, and a fresh supply of candles ordered up from the tents. The more the parties examined the matter, the less they were agreed; and the controversy began at last to assume that positive and rather warmish character which so often belongs to inquiries in which the data are few and obscure. It is then we find the imaginative or guessing process most vivid, exactly in proportion as the reasoning or matter-of-fact process becomes dull. The

interest, also, which people take in any such discussions is generally inversely as its importance; and the hope of agreement becomes less and less as the inquiry proceeds. In all probability such might have been the result of this battle in the cave touching poor Shiva's third eye, had not one of our periodical absentees arrived just at that moment. He wiped his spectacles, held a candle to the image, and declared that, until the dirt was washed away, we might go on disputing till doomsday without getting nearer the mark.

Before those eager combatants, "the eyes" and the "no eyes," had recovered from the oily pause cast upon the troubled waves of the controversy by this dictum, our head-servant came forward to announce the ever-welcome fact that dinner was on the table! The communication was received with a cheer that made the bats fly out of their holes in dismay.

It is, perhaps, needless to observe, that on each succeeding day the wine appeared to become more racy, the water cooler, the coffee more fragrant, the tea more refreshing, and, above all, the conversa-

tion more animated, gossipy, and instructive. I ought to have mentioned before, that although, unfortunately, there were no singers of the party, one gentleman played beautifully on the violoncello; the effect of which, in the solemn stillness of the cave, was singularly pleasing. We had also a great store of books; and happening to have some good readers (a rare catch), our evenings slipped away so merrily amongst the olden gods and goddesses of the eastern world, that we often sighed to think how soon we must return to the ordinary business of modern life.

I lay awake half the night of the controversy about Shiva's eye, thinking how we could best settle this great question; and at last bethought me of a scheme, which with the earliest dawn I put in practice. When my coxswain came in the morning for orders, I sent him back to the Theban, a frigate of which I had then the acting command, and bade him return as speedily as possible with the ship's fire-engine. Accordingly, before breakfast was well over, we had the hose led along and the pump in full action.

The deluge which was now poured over the celebrated Trimurti, must have enchanted the thirsty shades of the "water-loving Mahadeo." The Hindoos, assembled to see what was going on, were astonished and delighted, and so, in fact, were we, to discover how clear, sharp, and beautiful the sculptures stood out, after being played upon for a couple of hours, and well scrubbed with hard brushes in every corner. This service certainly had not been performed upon them for three centuries at the least, and possibly not for a thousand years.

At the next sitting of our grand committee on Shiva's well-washed countenance, the following notes were made by Mr. Erskine. "The face looking east has a fine Roman nose, and its brow is swollen, and protruded between the eyes. This was at first regarded as only the swelling protuberance between and above the eyelids, which is remarked by physiognomists to be indicative of passion; but having been led to more careful examination of it by Captain Basil Hall, to whose unwearied curiosity the present account owes much

of the accuracy that it may possess; and, from comparing it with similar protuberances on the brow of other figures in the cave, I have little doubt that it represents the third eye of Shiva, from which flame is supposed to issue, and fire by which the world is finally to be destroyed. As Shiva had five heads, though he had only one such eye, it is represented on his principal head alone, which, of course, is that looking eastward." (As the centre head faces the north, this observation refers to that which is turned to the right hand, or is looking towards the spectator's left.) "He has mustachios," adds the writer, "on his upper lip; and he and one other figure in the eastern wing are the only figures in the cave that have them. At the corner of each of his lips a tusk projects over the under lip. The lower lip of all the figures at Elephanta seems thickish, and more African than Asiatic. His tongue is thrust out between his lips; his eyebrows are not regularly arched, rather irregularly twisted, and depressed on each side towards the nose, as in those of a person habitually passionate."

So far the historian; but it would seem, from the printed account in the Bombay Transactions, that the party were not yet unanimous; for in a note, or protest, which I gave to Mr. Erskine for publication along with his account, the following words occur:

"This head seems to be speaking to the snake; and I would rather say that the tongue is protruded in doing so, than that it is indicative of anger: nor can I quite agree to the account of the eye-brows. They are certainly not arched; but the deviation is not much, nor does it convey to me any idea of agitation, but rather of mirth, as if he were singing to the snake, and gratified to see its pleasure. The dimples at the corner of the mouth, too, strike me as resembling the approach to a smile much more than the distortion of habitual passion; and the corners of the mouth are, if any thing, turned upwards. The mustachios, also, lend their aid in giving a fiercer look to Shiva than I can allow is intended by the sculptor."

Thus it will be perceived that travellers,

as well as doctors, can differ, even when the subject of examination is under their eye. In what follows relating to this beautiful head we were all quite agreed; and I add these few lines, more to complete the account, than from any particular interest they contain. Indeed, I question much if it be possible without numerous drawings to engage the attention agreeably or usefully towards any class of Hindoo antiquities. There are, indeed, some other specimens of ancient Indian sculpture which may form an exception, particularly an immense statue of solid granite, upwards of sixty feet high, in the centre of southern India, which I visited on crossing the peninsula.

Mr. Erskine concluded his account of the eastern head of the Trimurti in Elephanta, in these words:

"His cap is richly adorned with variegated figures, branches, and flowers; among others may be distinguished a skull, or death's head; a serpent, with various folds and branches of the bilva-tree, the leaves of which issue three from a point, like the trefoil; and nirgûndi, a sort of

shrub, which are symbols that belong peculiarly to Shiva; a few curls run along below his cap. Behind his cap the stone is excavated into two narrow parallel slips, (not seen in the drawing), the one higher than the other, in which two persons might lie stretched at length, without being observed from below; but there are no steps up to them."

The description given in the Bombay Transactions of the two other heads is equally minute, graphic, and strictly accurate; and nobody should visit the cave without that account to guide them. At this distance from the spot, however, those details, so peculiarly interesting when present, are apt to become tiresome.

This magnificent triad lies in a recess cut in the rock to the depth of thirteen feet, including the thickness of the doorway screen, or wall, which is about two feet and a half. The basement is raised about two feet nine inches from the ground. In the corners of the threshold are two holes, as if door-posts had been inserted in them; and in the floor is a groove, as if for receiving a screen, which may have

been occasionally let down to conceal the group. The vignette at the beginning of this volume, carefully copied from Mrs. Ashburner's drawing, gives a good idea of this singular work of art.

The occurrence of a triple head of such magnitude, and of such skill and beauty in the workmanship, in a spot so much within the range of observation, has naturally led travellers into various speculations as to its origin and the object of its sculptors. On this subject, the following remarks of Mr. Erskine are possessed of considerable interest, not only with reference to this particular section of the Elephanta cave, but as they relate to a curious branch of the fantastic mythology of the Hindoos.

"Such, then, is the remarkable figure that occupies the most conspicuous place in the temple, and which of late has generally been regarded as the Hindoo Trinity: but it appears that, if our opinions be guided by a general examination of this figure compared with the others in the excavation, and with the apparent design of the cave, little doubt will be left that

the whole excavation is a temple dedicated to Shiva alone, who is also singly represented by the three-headed bust. The impression made on Christians, however, by the view of this triple figure, has had more influence than any regard to genuine Hindu doctrines, or to the legends in the sacred books of the Brahmins, in fixing the opinions most prevalent on the subject of this mysterious bust. To account for the appearance of a many-headed monster in a mythology like that of the Hindus, which swarms with gods of every description, it does not seem necessary to resort to the doctrine of the Trinity, which cannot be correctly said to have a place in the theology of the Hindoos."*

* Bombay Transactions, vol. i.

# CHAPTER VIII.

## MYTHOLOGY OF ELEPHANTA.

For several days after commencing our researches in the cave at Elephanta, we found ample stores of interest in looking at the different sculptures on the rock, in making measurements of the figures, and in sketching those objects which appeared most curious. After a time we began to feel a still higher description of curiosity, as we gradually became acquainted with the different groups, and recognised over and over again the same features or attributes in the principal personages represented. We then naturally desired to be made better acquainted with the intentions of the persons whose piety, superstition, or political policy had devised this astonishing excavation. And we expected to derive more and more pleasure from contemplating the result, when the purpose

which the artists aimed at was told to us. A general call, therefore, was again made upon our accomplished and highly-informed companion, Mr. Erskine, that he should enlighten our European darkness a bit, and instruct us from time to time in the history of the gods, goddesses, bulls, elephant-headed monsters, and other fantastic idols before us. We alleged that we should draw and measure them more correctly, and perform the office of assistants to him as chronicler-general of the pic-nic with more spirit, if he would permit us to have some slight knowledge of what we were about.

"But then," he observed, "is it not proverbial even here on the spot, that Indian topics are a bore, and that Hindoo antiquities, mythology, and languages, are the supremest bores of all? unless, indeed," added he, "such a master-hand as that of Southey thinks fit to touch the subject with his inspiration, and to give to the world at large, in such a poem as the Curse of Kehama, a considerable portion of that pleasure which had been confined before to a few orientalists."

"Pray," said one of the company, "has Mr. Southey ever been in India?"

There was a pause of at least a minute; at the end of which a gentleman, who had just been reading the poem alluded to, declared that the author could not have been in the East, otherwise he never would have made one of his characters lie down to sleep

'Beneath a cocoa's feathery shade.'"

"Why not?" was asked by two or three voices.

"Because," said the objector, "a cocoa-nut tree affords no shade, or hardly any, and no native would ever think of such shelter from the sun; the image is purely European."

"Nevertheless," said a traveller of the party, a man of taste and observation, and long resident in the tropical districts of India where the cocoa-nut flourishes best, "it must be owned that, even if the poet have adopted an image from European customs, his description, as far as expression goes, is most admirably true to the scenery of this coun-

try; for no words can give a more perfect idea of the sort of shadow which is cast by the feathery top-knot of the cocoa-nut tree, than those which Southey has used."

A pretty brisk discussion now took place as to sundry other points in the Curse of Kehama, which ended, as such things generally do, by leaving each party where he had begun. Indeed, the hard hits of an argument are often like those of a hammer on a nail, which either drive it farther in, or, if that be impossible, flatten out the head into what is both technically and figuratively called a rivet. At all events, when we came to "divide," which we did in imitation of our betters, the numbers of those who said Southey could not have been in India were exactly equal to those who declared it to be impossible that any man who had never visited those regions, could have described them with so much accuracy both of colouring and mere outline, or with such wonderful truth of oriental feeling. There the matter rested for some ten years at least, when I had accidentally the pleasure to find myself, in London, sitting at dinner alongside the

poet himself. I told him of our battle in the cave, which, considering the ground on which it was fought, and the qualifications of the critics, he knew well how to appreciate. He smiled, but made no comment; while the expression of his countenance was such as one might fancy De Foe's to have been, had any wiseacre begged to ask if ever he had visited the island of Juan Fernandez?

This episode about the Curse of Kehama was of some use to us, by recalling scenes and circumstances in the mythology of the Hindoos which, but for the immortal verse to which they are so happily married, might have escaped our memories altogether. As, however, the knowledge derived from the poem, to which we often referred, was no more of the kind we wanted respecting the caves, than that which Shakespeare and the Waverley Novels give to the minute inquirer into the constitutional history of England, we joined unanimously in a petition to our master in these matters, to give us, in a few popular words, some idea of the religions which had prevailed in this quarter of the East.

Thus urged, our friend agreed to try his hand at making the subject a little less dry than usual; and while we closed round him, one fine cool evening, he gave us a sketch of what we required in order to a fuller comprehension of the ancient sculptures by which we were surrounded. The position chosen for this interesting lecture, to use Mr. Erskine's words, "was near the entrance of the temple, where the spacious front is supported by two massy pillars and two pilasters, forming three openings, under a steep rock thickly overhung by brushwood and wild shrubs. The long ranges of columns that appear closing in perspective on every side; the flat roof of solid rock, that seems to be prevented from falling only by the massy pillars, whose capitals are pressed down and flattened as if by the superincumbent weight; the darkness that obscures the interior of the temple, which is dimly lighted only by the entrances, and the gloomy appearance of the gigantic stone figures ranged along the wall, and hewn, like the whole temple, out of the living rock, joined to the strange uncertainty that hangs over

the history of the place, carry the mind back to distant periods, and impress it with that kind of uncertain religious awe with which the grander works of ages of darkness are generally contemplated."

Were the account not quite so long, I should feel much tempted to quote the whole of the luminous summary which Mr. Erskine gave us of the rise and progress of the three great religious sects of India, the Brahminical, the Bouddhist, and the Jainas. Those, however, who have any further curiosity on these subjects, will find them admirably treated in the Bombay Transactions, vol. I.

Many of the positions advanced were so entirely new to most of us, and also so different from the crude and ill-digested notions of those of our party who had attended to the subject in a superficial manner, that much animated discussion arose amongst us. In no great space of time, the company in the cave talked themselves into a famous mess of confusion, when they were very glad to appeal once more to the only man of the party who had really considered the points

in discussion between us, which related chiefly to the numbers and qualities of the inferior powers in the crowded theological list of the Hindoos. Our friend was now, therefore, called upon to instruct us in the circumstances which had degraded a theology, originally so pure as to possess, we were told, but one deity, into such a multitudinous creed.

He first stated the fact, and then shewed us how it applied in practice amongst the Hindoos. "Besides the three great gods," said he, "Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, there are, it appears, a large crowd of minor deities. The wind, the sea, the elements, have all their gods; the sun, moon, and stars also; every river and fountain is either a deity, or has a deity to preside over it; so that nothing is done but by, or through a god. The greater deities have, besides, a numerous class of dependents and servants; and human passions being once bestowed on the gods, heaven, as well as the earth, has its physician, its poet, and its dancing girls. In this great crowd of deities there is no man, however capricious or

humble, that may not find some divinity, or portion of the divinity, suited to his humour, or self-humiliation. If a person find some difficulty in approaching Ram, that god's monkey-servant, Hanumant, may, however, claim his worship. A little red paint thrown on a stone, or on the stump of a tree, converts it into a Hindoo god, and all the lower classes who pass fall down and worship."

"But, pray," some one asked, "do the natives really believe these stocks and stones to be gods, actually gifted with intelligence and higher powers than themselves? For instance, if we had questioned any one of the multitude whom we saw the other day throwing cocoa-nuts into the sea, as to the number and attributes of the gods before whom he was prostrating himself on the beach, what would have been his answer?"

"I am glad you interrupted me to ask this question," said our good-natured preceptor; "for it deserves particular notice, that even in this apparent degradation of the human intellect, if you ask one of the lowest of these unfortunate beings how

many gods there are? he will immediately answer, 'one God only!' And, I think, you will discover, that although they pay religious adoration to stocks and stones, from some superstitious belief that a portion of divinity resides in them, they never confound these subordinate objects of worship with the one great God, the supposed creator and preserver of the universe, but whom they consider as too mighty for them to venture to approach. When the Brahmins, therefore, are taxed with idolatry, they always excuse themselves by alleging the necessity of making an impression on rude minds by means of some intelligible symbols, on which the ignorant may rest their thoughts, and to which they may look for reward or punishment."

"In the Brahminical religion, as there were many incarnations, so the gods are supposed to have appeared with several heads, with the heads of animals, with a number of hands, and other singularities; and, consequently, their images, in such temples as this in which we are now sitting at our tea and toast, correctly repre-

sent all these peculiarities, as I have already, in some degree, pointed out to you in the different compartments of Elephanta, and we can do more particularly to-morrow, if you please. But the religion of the Bouddhists differs very greatly from that just described. Amongst the Brahmins, God is introduced every where—by the Bouddhists no where. The deities of the Brahmins pervade and animate all nature—but the god of the Bouddhists, like that of the Epicureans, remains in repose, quite unconcerned about human affairs, and therefore is not the object of worship. With them there is no intelligent divine being who judges of human actions as good or bad, and rewards or punishes them as such. This, indeed, is practically the same as having no god at all. Good and ill, according to their creed, are, however, supposed to spring invariably from virtue and vice, there being, as they believe, an inseparable and necessary connexion between virtue and prosperity, vice and misfortune. Yet, as the mind of man must have some object of confidence on which to rest its hopes,

and to which to direct its supplication and prayer, the Bouddhists teach, that from time to time men of surpassing piety and self-denial have appeared on earth, and from their singular worth have, after death, been transferred to a state of superior bliss; which state, however, they say, we can only intimate by describing it as an absence of all pain, as we can only define health by an absence of all disease. These saints, or prophets, after reforming the world in their life-time, and by their superior sanctity attaining the power of performing miracles, are still imagined, after death, to have certain powers of influencing us. It is these men, transferred by death to bliss, who are the object of Bouddhist worship. This worship assumes different forms in different countries, and is by some supposed to be more widely diffused than any other religion. It is also worthy of remark, that wherever this form of religion prevails in its original state, the relics of these holy men, or saints, are the objects of worship. The largest temples are often in the form of a pyramid, or the section of a globe, and

are supposed to contain the tooth, or hair, or some other relic, of the saint.

"The forms of these holy places have been adopted from the custom prevalent in those countries of depositing the ashes of the deceased under a pyramid, or under a globular mound. The pyramids are often of great size, and on their summits are umbrellas, which are frequently adorned with bells; and sometimes this pyramid is gilded over. Other temples, of nearly similar construction, but hollow within, contain images to which adoration is directed. The images of these saints have different attitudes, sometimes sitting cross-legged in a meditative posture, sometimes standing upright. As all the ideas of the Bouddhist relate to men, and as no incarnations, or transformations, of superior beings are recorded, it is obvious, that in their temples we can expect to find no unnatural images, no figures compounded of man and beast, nor monsters with many hands or many heads, as we see here. As the priests and scholars of the Bouddhists live in a sort of collegiate establishment near some great temple, we always find

a multitude of cells around the excavation in their temples."

I had afterwards various opportunities of verifying these remarks about the Bouddhist form of religion, in many other parts of India, in Ceylon, and lastly in China. At Canton, Lord Amherst and his suite, on their return from Pekin, were lodged in a very extensive temple dedicated to the worship of Bouddha. It was singularly interesting to observe, that the ceremonial duties of this establishment were performed by a multitude of bare-footed and shaven-crowned priests dressed in yellow robes, and looking marvellously like some of the religious orders of Roman Catholics whom we see in Italy. These persons were lodged in cells built round the court of the great temple, pagoda, or joss-house, as the English indiscriminately call the religious edifices of the eastern world. Many of these worthies were made to turn out for the accommodation of the strangers, in a manner which, though it shocked our delicacy not a little, appeared to produce no such effect on the lay part of the Chinese population, who shoved

their poor priests about in a very unceremonious style.

I remember once conversing on this subject with a Chinese, an intelligent Hong merchant, who spoke English perfectly; but I could not make him understand our feelings of respect to the ministers of any religion.

"What have we to do with that sort of business?" he asked; "the Chinese government provides and pays for a certain number of priests, who perform a certain number of ceremonies, chant so many prayers, and, in short, take charge of the whole religion of the country, leaving us merchants, and all other persons, to attend exclusively to our own business, without having any thing to do with the matter."

In corroboration of this strange indifference amongst the Chinese, it may be stated, that in the letters of the early Jesuits the most bitter complaints are found of the difficulties they encountered, not so much in converting the Chinese from a false doctrine to the true faith, as in getting the slippery minds of their

Neophytes to hold fast any ideas upon such subjects at all.

It will easily be supposed, that one of the points upon which we felt the greatest curiosity during our visit to Elephanta, was the age of these caves. I cannot say that we came to any safe conclusion on this branch of the subject.

"Nothing presents itself in these caves," observed our antiquary, "which can lead to a satisfactory solution of the important and curious question, in what age, or by what dynasty, was this vast temple completed? One fact is worthy of notice, that a greater number of magnificent cave-temples present themselves on this part of the western coast of the peninsula of India, than are to be met with any where else in Hindoostan. The caves of Elephanta, those of Kanara, Amboli, and some others on the island of Salsette; the fine cave of Carli, on the road to Poona by the Bor Ghaut, the still more extensive and magnificent ranges at Ellora, not to mention several smaller cave-temples in the Kohan and near the Adjunta Pass, are all on Mahratta ground, and

seem to shew the existence of some great and powerful dynasty, which must have reigned many years to complete works of such labour and extent. The existence of temples of opposite characters, and of different and hostile religions, only a few miles from each other, and, in some instances, even united in the same range, is a singular fact, which well deserves to excite the attention and exercise the industry of the Indian antiquary. Thus, within no great distance from Bombay we have the caves of Kanara on the island of Salsette, and those of Carli on the mainland, both evidently belonging to the Bouddhists; while those of Amboli, also on Salsette, and of Elephanta on the adjacent island, belong to the Brahmins; and the wonderful caves of Ellora possess excavations of both classes."

After listening to these explanations, we returned the next day with fresh vigour to an actual examination of the strange abode in which we were living, respecting the dimensions of which a very few observations will suffice.

The great temple was found, by careful

measurements, to be about one hundred and thirty feet deep, measuring from the chief entrance to the further end of the cave; and one hundred and thirty-three feet broad, from the eastern to the western entrance. It then rested (1813) on twenty-six pillars, of which eight were broken at that time; and on the sides were carved sixteen pilasters. As neither the floor nor the roof are in one plane, the height of the cave is found to vary from seventeen feet and a half to fifteen feet. The plan of the temple is regular, there being eight pillars and pilasters in a line from the northern to the southern entrance, and the same number from the eastern to the western entrance. It is interesting to observe, however, that the whole frame and form of the excavation, which to the eye appears regular, when critically examined and measured is found in an uncommon degree faulty. The pillars in the different ranges deviate from the straight line, some advancing and some receding beyond the proper places. Many of them stand with a certain degree of obliquity; few are exactly

of the same dimensions; and the different sides of the same pillar are rarely similar to each other. Even the whole temple itself, which to the eye presents the appearance of regularity, has no two sides of the same magnitude. The left side of the cave is one hundred and thirty-three feet eight inches in length; while the right side is only one hundred and twenty-eight feet four inches. Varieties of this kind are observable in every other part. Some of the pillars are situated from each other at the distance of only twelve feet ten inches, others are separated to sixteen feet four inches and a half, some at fifteen feet, and so on. The size of the pillars is not less various; and as their inequality extends to every part of the temple, great and small, it has given rise to the idea that it was intentional; in support of which view it has been alleged, that the Hindoos never make the sides of a tank, or reservoir, perfectly equal. But although this may be true, it only shews their want of skill and correct taste. Yet, in a work hewn and carved out of rock, with such prodigious labour and expense

as the Elephanta temple, such defects appear astonishing.

We are apt to suppose, though perhaps from habit alone, that there is a natural or instinctive feeling of order in our minds which suggests to us to make the opposite sides of a room, for example, parallel and equal. But I remember to have often remarked circumstances in India which would seem to prove, that the natives possess but little of the bump of order on their skulls. I once watched a set of palankeen bearers who were sorely perplexed when ordered to spread a carpet. The apartment happened to be considerably larger than the carpet; but, for their lives, the poor fellows could not determine how to put it down. First they got it over on one side, then they pulled it till it touched the end of the room. In both these cases the unequal proportions of the uncovered spaces struck their senses, but afforded them apparently no clue to the remedy. They next dragged the carpet into one corner, and stood looking at it, muttering and chattering to one another, like so many puzzled monkeys, for five minutes.

At length, after sundry other trials, and many pauses, they finally arranged it, in the greatest perplexity, in what is called diamond fashion, with the corners of the carpet touching the middle part of the wall, instead of being pointed towards the angles of the room, so that the sides were as far from parallelism as could possibly be. They now looked at one another, laughed, and, with the most satisfactory chuckle in the world, left the room under the conviction of having performed the service upon which they were sent in the most perfect style.

After we had worked for nearly a whole day at the curious avatar of Shiva, a grand hunt was ordered after traces of Bouddhist images. As the detestation of the Brahmins towards poor Bouddh, is nearly as deep-rooted as the hatred which exists between those European sects which differ from one another merely by slight shades of doctrine, the existence of an image of this rival deity in a temple dedicated to Shiva, would be about as great an abomination as an organ, or a painting, in a Presbyterian kirk.

After much examination, we discovered only two figures that could by possibility be representatives of this hostile god; one of which we discovered in the western wing of the cave, the other in the first compartment on the left of the grand entrance. This spot we generally made use of as a sort of pantry, in which stood cold chickens, biscuits, and wine, all day long to refresh the spirits of the party. I can still see 'reflected to memory's eye' two goglets of the most deliciously cool water that ever gladdened the parched palate of a traveller, filled from a little spring which dribbled over the brow of the rock, just to the eastward of the cave, after stealing out like a snake from amongst the broad-leaved brushwood fringing the edge of the cliff. As the cave faces the north, and the sun at its greatest height shines obliquely over the precipice, it leaves all that side of the hill cool and agreeable, when the rest of the island is parched up and withered. We always took care, however, to have our goglets suspended in the shade, and in the draught. These capital contrivances are earthen-

ware vessels, of a red colour, only half baked, and so porous, that, although the water does not actually trickle from them, it forms a coating outside like dew, and sometimes runs into drops. This being evaporated by the current of hot dry air sweeping past, a degree of cold is produced, the value of which only those who have visited such regions of the sun can have learned fully to appreciate. Of course, when the more serious affairs of champagne and claret came into requisition, we summoned our regular wine cooler, or abdar, who, by some strange chemical hocus-pocus connected with dissolving nitre, in which he twisted about the bottles for a few minutes, placed before us, as one of our party exultingly expressed it, "a nectar fit for the jolliest of these gods themselves, should they have returned to life and reclaimed their cave." I cannot answer for this; but I am sure that nothing short of the "last pang shall tear from my heart" the recollection of the intense enjoyment of those half dreamy, half waking, but perfectly enchanting two or three hours towards the close of every day in the

Elephanta cave; when the ladies and children had sauntered off to their tent, or climbed the hill to take a look at the ghauts of the Mahratta country, or to see the sun set between them and Arabia—while we luxurious lords of the creation who remained behind flung our feet on the table, or rested them against some angle of the excavation—thrust our hookah pipes or our cigars into our mouths, swung back on our chairs, and asked and thought of no higher heaven upon earth.

Exactly abreast of the spot where these temperate revels were carried on, sat a figure in stone, with whose countenance and attitude we soon became wonderfully familiar. Many a merry bumper we tossed off to a better understanding of his mysterious history; for, to all appearance, the rogue (being a Bouddhist) had no more business in the Elephanta cave than we Topee-wallas, or hat-wearing heretics of the west. This worthy personage, unlike his brother gods and goddesses farther within-doors, boasted of only two arms; a shabby allowance, in a company where any figure pretending to the rank of a gen-

tleman had six at least. Unfortunately, both of our friend's arms were broken off; perhaps by some of the shot fired by a Portuguese fidalgo, who, Captain Pyke informs us, amused himself in the cave with a great gun. A monkey in a china shop has some shadow of sense and purpose in cracking the crockery; but the Portuguese nobleman, blazing away at the sculptures of an ancient temple, must be allowed to beat Jacko hollow.

There are still left some indications, however, to shew that the hands of this figure rested on his lap. He is sitting (or was sitting, when we left him) on the Padmasan, or lotus seat, the stalk of which is supported by two persons below, very much as occurs in the caves of Kanara or Salsette, which are undoubtedly Boudhist temples. This statue is certainly by far the most puzzling figure in all Elephanta; for we know of no instance in which Shiva is so represented: and yet, if this really be Bouddh, how the deuce comes he into a Brahminical cave? In the present orthodox Hindoo mythology, at least, it is well known that Bouddh, in

so far as he is admitted at all, is considered as an avatar of Vishnu, incarnated for the purpose of leading mankind into error. He is, therefore, rarely represented at all, and never worshipped in that form. One can understand this easily enough; and yet the sly authorities who devised the great work at Elephanta appear to have thought it but safe to commence by propitiating so important a personage, for the compartment in which this image of the Father of Evil (if such he be) is sculptured, must have been one of the earliest excavated.

I have taken pains to verify the references from the Archæologia, vol. VII., by examining Captain Pyke's original journal, which is still preserved at the India House. This gentleman, who was afterwards governor of St. Helena, visited the Elephanta cave in 1712; and his account, given in the log-book of the ship Stringer, is not a little curious. It is written in a quaint, but graphic style, and is illustrated by several drawings of no great merit, either as to execution or fidelity of outline. The old boy, indeed,

seems to have been rather ashamed of himself for bestowing so much trouble on such a subject, for he winds up his description with these words:

"Thus I have given an account how busily I spent 2 days with an Industry about Triffles, w^h^ if I had Rightly applyed to y^e^ Art of Getting of Money, would a' tended to a better Purpose."

It was curious to observe how differently we viewed the temple on different days, and how completely the objects of our curiosity changed as we became more and more acquainted with their history, and with the relations which linked them in one grand series. Fortunately, too, our party consisted of such a variety of persons, that some new thought was perpetually starting up, which being speedily seized upon, was generally turned to good account. I think it was not until we had been poking about the cave for nearly a week that any particular curiosity was expressed as to the intention which the contrivers of it had in view in making this enormous excavation. At length some one plucked up courage enough to avow

his utter want of acquaintance with the uses which the Hindoos make of their temples or pagodas; and it was sufficiently apparent, by the looks of the rest, that the majority of our number were in as blessed a state of ignorance as the bold spokesman. All eyes were turned towards our mentor, who, had he not been the most good-natured of mortals, must have been ferreted to death by our inquiries.

"I suppose," said he, "you are aware that the use made of temples by the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as by the modern Hindoos, is materially different from that required of them by Christian nations?"

"I tell you," replied the information-hunter, "that I know nothing at all about the matter."

"Nor I—nor I," cried various other members of the cave.

"Well, well," exclaimed the obliging Oriental scholar, laughing, "I must tell you, then, that a Hindoo goes alone to the Pagoda, as an ancient Roman would have done, offers his solitary prayers be-

fore his idol, prostrates himself in its presence, and then leaves his offering. He attempts in this way to bribe his god to prosper him in his trade, whether that be merchandise, war, or theft. There is no stated regular time of teaching amongst the Hindoos — no public prayers said by a priest in the name of a mixed congregation — no gathering of the people to go through a solemn service. Their great festivals are like our fairs. Each man proceeds to his own temple, makes his offering at the feet of the idol, then walks out again and purchases sweetmeats. All teaching or reading of the sacred books is in private houses; or if abroad, merely in the courts of the temple, never within the consecrated edifice. The verandahs or porticoes round about are used just as any others equally convenient would be. This use, to which the courts of the temple are applied, will throw light on many passages of the history and sacred volumes of the Jews. It is evident that the religious edifices of nations whose worship is so conducted need not be large like our churches, since it is not required that they should contain

a multitude. In all very ancient temples, however magnificent, the part in which the Deity is supposed to dwell is small, and surrounded by numerous buildings in which the priests and servants of the temple reside. This seems to have been the plan of the first temple at Jerusalem, and it certainly was that of the older Grecian temples, as we may observe from the Ion of Euripides; and it is at this day that presented by the temple at Mecca. With the Hindoos the great object of worship is not constantly exposed to view, nor is it placed in the larger outer building, or excavation, but always in some inner, small, and dark apartment, usually having only one door, and requiring to have lights burning before it, in order to its being seen, and facing the door, so as to be visible from the further side of an intervening saloon."

I regret that I have not left myself space to introduce several other extremely curious speculations respecting the religious opinions and observances of the Hindoos with which Mr. Erskine favoured us. After all, however, I am not sure if

there was not fully as much interest in viewing these curious remains of ancient Hindoo sculptures with reference to modern customs, as there was in tracing their origin and connexion with the older theology of the East. We could easily detect resemblances in domestic habits, and particularly in dress, between those which appear to have existed at the time the excavation was made, and those now seen in the bazaars of India. It seems of consequence to mention this fact, because some writers have stated the contrary; and if their reports were correct, it would imply a change in the manners of the Hindoos, quite contrary to observation in other matters. The fact is, there is not a single piece of dress on any figure in the whole cave, except the fancy cap on some of their heads, which is not at this day currently met with in India. The *shela*, or long web of thin cloth folded round the loins, is that in general use all over Hindoostan and the Deccan. The same may be said of the jewels; they are precisely the heavy, tasteless ornaments which overload the necks, arms, ankles,

and ears of the modern Hindoos. "If most of the figures are nearly naked, this," to borrow the words of our great cave oracle, "is owing to several reasons. Statuaries naturally dislike formal dresses, as an encumbrance to their art, since they often conceal, or deform, the most graceful contours of the human body, the expression of which is the great triumph of their art. In the next place, there are really very few pieces of genuine Hindoo dress. The Brahmin, for example, wears only the *dhoter*, or cloth which covers the lower part of the body, and the *angwaster* wrapped round the upper part. Indeed, until he is married he wears nothing but the *angwaster* and the *langoti*, or short cloth passing between the legs, and fastened before and behind to a string round the loins. The *Sanyasi* uses an *angwaster* dyed yellow with saffron, and called *chati*, and, of course, the *langoti*. The Gosawis and the Byragis wear the *langoti* alone. The only regular parts of a Hindoo woman's dress are, first, the *laguda*, a web of cloth from sixteen to twenty cubits in length, which, after being wound round

the middle part of the body and the upper part of the legs, is thrown over the shoulders, and forms one of the most graceful coverings imaginable; and secondly, the *cholee*, a short jacket, with short sleeves, used rather to support than to conceal the breast. Most of the other articles of dress now worn in India have been introduced by the Mussulmen, such as the *angraka* and *dopatæ*, which cover the upper part of the body; the turban, also, and the *cholna*, or short drawers, have been introduced by the Mahomedan conquerors of Hindustan."

"It should also be remembered," continues Mr. Erskine, "that when a Hindoo approaches his gods reverently, he purifies himself, and throws off all his dress except that part which covers his loins; and many of the figures in the cave are in the act of adoration. Finally, the principal figures in the cave of Elephanta are gods, who, in most nations, have been represented with little covering. None of the existing figures in this excavation are sculptured in a state of entire nudity, though, it is said, that some of those now

broken more nearly approached to the state of nature, and were mutilated by the piety or wantonness of visiters. As for the circumstance of the figures being beardless, it is owing to their representing celestial beings who are supposed to enjoy eternal youth. The mûnis or celestial sages, however, are always represented in these sculptures with beards as aged men. Shiva, also, in Hindoo poems, as well as in paintings, has frequently a beard or mustachios, such as we see in one of the heads of the great Triad."

It has been long a matter of dispute amongst travellers what is the degree of genius and taste which is displayed in the great temple of Elephanta, and in the sculptures, by which it is undoubtedly rendered one of the most extraordinary works of human exertion. Some writers speak in raptures both of the design and of the execution of the several compartments; and it cannot be denied that in some of them there is very considerable merit. On this point, and also on the general character of the cave as a work of art, our party were at first much divided in

opinion; but as we became familiar with the details, and gave ourselves opportunities of judging of the general effect under different aspects, and under different shades of temperament in our own minds, we gradually settled into a pretty uniform estimate of the station in which this wonderful temple ought to be placed. Of course, if each of us had been called upon to write down his opinion on this delicate point, some differences, arising out of the variety of tastes amongst us, might have been started; and persons at a distance might become more confused than instructed by such a regiment of authorities.

The following statement, however, which was actually drawn up in the cave, gave such general satisfaction at the moment to the high contending parties on the spot, who possessed close at hand every possible advantage of checking its details, and of judging of its general correctness, that perhaps I cannot do better than wind up with it the narrative of our joyous Elephanta picnic. Independently, indeed, of the local fidelity of Mr. Erskine's remarks, in their

direct application to the cave in question, they will be found, perhaps, to throw some useful light on certain phases of the fine arts, by practical references to countries in very different states of civilisation, and subjected to totally different forms of government and manners.

"To me," says the writer, "it appears, that while the whole conception and plan of the temple is extremely grand and magnificent, and while the outline and disposition of the separate figures indicate great talent and ingenuity, the execution and finishing of the figures in general (though some of them prove the sculptor to have had great merit) fall below the original idea, and are often very defective, in no instance being possessed of striking excellence. The figures have something of rudeness and want of finish, the proportions are sometimes lost, the attitudes are forced, and every thing indicates the infancy of the art, though a vigorous infancy. The grouping appears to be still more defective than the execution of the separate figures: a number of little and almost dwarfish figures are

huddled around one or two larger ones. Indeed, it deserves consideration whether the nature of the Hindoo mythology, which represents every thing by hieroglyphics, be not extremely unfavourable to the fine arts. Painting and sculpture owe their chief beauties to a successful representation of external objects, and to a happy development of the universal feelings and passions of human nature as expressed on the human frame. But, in the mythology of the Brahmins, such is the number of legends relating to each of the gods, and so much are their various qualities and properties depicted by conventional marks and symbols which determine the character and situation of each individual, much as a written mark would do, that the ingenuity of the artist is not required to indicate, by the fine touches of his art, what is done by a rougher and grosser way. The Egyptian sculpture seems never to have passed beyond this step; but the Greeks, by their fine genius, burst the shackles which they received from their masters, and their statues and other sculptures will be found most excellent where

the general characters and passions of human nature swallow up the understood symbols of the individual represented, and when the painter, rather than the people, speaks. The use of symbols, therefore, seems to be taking a step backwards, and to be degrading that beautiful art, from exhibiting a representation of general nature intelligible to all mankind, to the exhibitions of a local and temporary character, intelligible only to those whose age and country have qualified them to peruse it. When this principle is carried its whole length, it brings back the fine arts from giving representations of ideal nature, and strong and refined passions, to the mere vulgar office of copying external objects. By making them a provincial dialect, instead of an universal and eternal language, this practice has a tendency to strike genius out of the art. The general use of such symbols, accordingly, appears to me to have combined with other causes to blunt the sense of the Hindoos for the fine arts. They are delighted to recognise a deity by his *Vahana*, or by his many heads and numerous arms,

but they appear to set little value on the accurate delineation of a passion, or the fine forms that start from beneath the chisel or the pencil. The passion being represented by its artificial, conventional symbol, the natural sign, or that which would render it true to universal nature, and consequently intelligible to all mankind, loses its value amongst the natives of India. The Hindoos are always children, and amused with baubles; even their groups representing living beings in pictures are generally like still life. If there are many figures in the piece, they are commonly seated, and the action is rarely represented, or, if attempted, it is generally an obvious one, like that of a fight or a battle. The various figures, as may be remarked in this cave of Elephanta, are never made to concur by different actions towards one end, so as to preserve unity in the piece. While sculpture is in this state, and while the art of grouping and of telling a story is in this condition, it is not going too far to consider the art in its infancy."

It was a melancholy day, indeed, when we prepared to break up our quarters at Elephanta; for the painful impression dwelt heavily on our minds, that we should never all meet together again. We expected, it is true, still to fall in occasionally with one another—during a morning visit, at a dinner, or in a ball-room. But what poor and unsatisfactory substitutes, after all, are such snatches of intercourse in public, to the deep delights of a well-managed, private, almost secret conclave, in such an out-of-the-way corner? There, and there alone, those who are most attached can stray together, unheeded by the rest, or sit together, or join in common pursuits day after day, not only without observation, but almost without their own consciousness of the growing intimacy between them, or of the gradual kindling of those flames destined, perhaps, to endure throughout life. Of all spots, indeed, that the queer little god of smiles and tears (who occupies a niche in every mythology) has selected for his avatars on earth, I should say the temple of Elephanta, with such a party, was

amongst the most favourable for the purposes of his worship!

With heavy hearts, then, we took a last view of the dear old cave, trudged slowly down the valley in silence, and, hardly deigning to say adieu to the crumbling elephant which has given its name to the island, we embarked in the bunder-boat prepared to receive us, and, just as the sun went down, relanded at Bombay.

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE ROYAL MARINES.
## INTRICACIES OF NAVAL RESPONSIBILITY.
## SIR JOSIAS ROWLEY.

THE words Marine and Mariner differ by one small letter only; but no two races of men, I had well nigh said no two animals, differ from one another more completely than the 'Jollies' and the 'Johnnies.' The marines, as I have before mentioned, are enlisted for life, or for long periods, as in the regular army, and, when not employed afloat, are kept in barracks, in such constant training, under the direction of their officers, that they are never released for one moment of their lives from the influence of strict discipline and habitual obedience. The sailors, on the contrary, when their ship is paid off, are turned adrift, and so completely scattered abroad, that they generally lose, in the riotous dissipation of a

few weeks, or it may be days, all they have learned of good order during the previous three or four years. Even when both parties are placed on board ship, and the general discipline maintained in its fullest operation, the influence of regular order and exact subordination is at least twice as great over the marines as it ever can be over the sailors. Many, I may say, most of their duties are entirely different. It is true, both the marines and the seamen pull and haul at certain ropes leading along the quarter-deck; both assist in scrubbing and washing the decks; both eat salt junk, drink grog, sleep in hammocks, and keep watch at night; but in almost every other thing they differ. As far as the marines are concerned, the sails would never be let fall, or reefed, or rolled up. There is even a positive Admiralty order against their being made to go aloft; and, accordingly, a marine in the rigging is about as ridiculous and helpless an object, as a sailor would prove if thrust into a tight, well pipe-clayed pair of pantaloons, and barred round the throat with a stiff stock. No

marine that I ever saw (except one, and he was a gipsy) could learn to pull an oar really well, nor any seaman to handle a firelock like a soldier. Yet both these duties are often of the highest importance to the respective parties when employed on service in boats, and ought invariably to be taught as far as possible. If the safety of the ship depended upon it, no marine could ever swing round the hand-lead, without the risk of breaking his sconce—no sailors were ever yet taught to march even moderately well in line.

In short, without going further, it may be said, that the colour of their clothing, and the manner in which it is put on, do not differ more from one another than the duties and habits of the marines and sailors. Jack wears a blue jacket, and the Jolly wears a red one. Jack would sooner take a round dozen than be seen with a pair of braces across his shoulders; while the marine, if deprived of his suspensors, would speedily be left sans culotte. A thorough-going, barrack-bred, regular-built marine, in a ship of which the sergeant-major truly loves his art, has, with-

out any very exaggerated metaphor, been compared to a man who has swallowed a set of fire-irons; the tongs representing the legs, the poker the back-bone, and the shovel the neck and head. While, on the other hand, your sailor-man is to be likened to nothing, except one of those delicious figures in the fantoccini show-boxes, where the legs, arms, and head, are flung loosely about to the right and left, no one bone apparently having the slightest organic connexion with any other; the whole being an affair of strings, and springs, and universal joints!

The marines live, day and night, in the after part of the ship, close to the apartments of the officers; their arm-chest is placed on the quarter-deck; their duties, even in cases where they are most mixed up with those of the seamen, group them well aft. The marines are exclusively planted as sentries at the cabin-doors of the captain and the officers; and even the look-out-men on the quarters, at night, are taken from the royal corps. To all this it may be added, that the marines furnish the officers with such small service,

in the way of attendance, as they may require, and generally wait at table.

It is of the utmost importance to observe; that all these minor points, and many others upon which I have not touched, have now grown into such complete matters of usage, that they are scarcely, if at all, noticed. So gradually, however, has this sort of natural, or necessary, estrangement been brought about between the two component parts of the ship's company, that it now requires only a small degree of judicious care on the part of the captain and officers to preserve the requisite separation, without, at the same time, giving the least offence either to the marines or to the sailors.

To enumerate the various occasions upon which the captain has it in his power to shew the marines how thoroughly he depends upon them, and considers them as his loyal and trusty body-guard, might perhaps be considered tedious. But I may be allowed to remark, that things have at length arrived at that enviable state, in which the required effect is produced, in all its useful extent, without

the operation of the system being rendered disagreeable in its details, or in any respect grating to the feelings of the persons whom these devices are intended to influence and control. The power given to the officers of His Majesty's ships, by the authority of actual law, together with long-established and well-understood usage, is, no doubt, very great; but even these sanctions, powerful as they are, would prove insufficient, in certain emergencies, for the maintenance of strict discipline, were it not backed by the physical force of the marines; or, I might say, with more propriety, were it not always ready to be backed by that force if necessary. The grand secret, accordingly, appears to consist in arranging matters in such a way, that the truth of these things may be felt so distinctly by all parties, that an occasion shall very seldom arise on which it will be necessary to put this singular combination of moral and physical force into action. If the power of the officers is so fortified as to be manifestly impregnable, any idea of attacking it will hardly enter the heads

of those who otherwise might feel disposed to resist lawful authority. Thus, in practice, the force alluded to, although it continues in a latent state, is always ready, as at the touch of a trigger, to explode with prodigious effect.

I forget who remarks, that there are no guns more useful or less used than those which line the endless tiers of batteries and galleries at Gibraltar. Their admirable arrangement, and the skill with which the works are kept in order, to say nothing of their inherent force, puts all idea of now capturing that place so totally out of the question, that an attempt will probably not soon occur again; the result of one siege being enough to last for many a century. And so it is (to compare small forces to great) with the marines, who, by a somewhat strained, yet intelligible analogy, may be said to form the Gibraltar batteries of naval discipline.

Amongst the joint characteristics of a soldier and a sailor which distinguish the royal marine, there is generally found a strong attachment to his officer, coupled with an unusual sensitiveness, and anxiety

not only to gain, but to preserve to the last, the good opinion of his companions in arms. I have several times witnessed the predominance of these feelings, at moments when it might have been supposed a man's thoughts would be occupied with very different reflections.

I remember an instance in which this ruling passion, as it may be called, was shewn to be strong in death. At half-past nine o'clock in the evening, after a long and sultry day in Madras Roads, the officers of the flag-ship were sitting round the ward-room table, enjoying a sober glass of well-cooled wine and water, when their hilarity was suddenly interrupted by the report of a musket, fired apparently close to the door, which, of course, in those climates, is always left open. The officers rushed out, and, directed by the smoke, sprung to the quarter-deck, where they found Evan Lewis, the corporal of marines, prostrate at the foot of the poop-ladder, and mortally wounded. This man, who was as good a soldier as ever served afloat, had stepped on the poop to commence his rounds, with his wonted preci-

sion, just as the bell struck three. On asking the question, "Is all well?" and being answered by the usual echo, "All's well," he turned to descend the ladder, when the sentinel brought down his musket, and fired. The ball passed through the unfortunate man's body, ploughed a deep groove in the quarter-deck, and lodged in the coil of the fore-brace, near the main-mast.

The poor corporal, who, of course, fell down headlong, was removed under the poop awning, and laid in as easy a posture as possible, with his head resting on the marine officer's lap, a kind-hearted soul, who from time to time wept bitterly over his fallen comrade, as he called the dying veteran, and in vain tried to cheer up his fast-ebbing spirits. The surgeon, indeed, seemed to be the only person unmoved by the scene; he, however, being an old hand in such matters, knew the value of coolness. Having first examined the wound slowly and carefully, he paused for a moment, looked the poor sufferer in the face for a second or two, and then drawing his breath, while he resolutely

kept his feelings in check, said, mournfully, "My fine fellow—if you have any affairs to settle, you must lose no time—you cannot possibly live long!"

The wounded man looked wistfully up in his officer's face, and said, with an air of great disappointment, "I did not think, sir, my time had been so near." After making particular inquiry whether any one else had been hurt by the ball, which he knew had passed through him, he expressed a wish to have the man brought aft who had fired the musket. It was a strange moment when the murderer was confronted with his victim. "Why did you do this?" inquired the dying soldier, in a voice of the greatest mildness.

"I thought it had been the sergeant," coolly replied the villain; nor could he ever afterwards be made to speak another word on the subject. In all probability he was insane, though there was no attempt to establish this, and he was hanged on the beach abreast of the ship a few days afterwards, having been tried by the supreme court of Madras, within whose jurisdiction the offence was committed.

The pain of the wound gradually subsided as the blood flowed, and the poor fellow now begged that prayers might be read to him. This was accordingly done by the first lieutenant, in the presence of the rest of the officers and the dying man's messmates. He paid the closest attention to what was said; and at the conclusion expressed himself happy and confident, ready to die in peace with all the world, and, as he hoped, also with his Maker. Some wine was then given him by permission of the surgeon, who saw that all must soon be over. When he drank it, he exclaimed, "Ah, that too revives me; but still I feel very weary and drowsy." He was recommended to go to sleep. "Ay! it will be a long, long sleep," he said, with a tone of deep sorrow. But immediately afterwards, as if ashamed of his weakness, he cast his eyes round the group, and in a cheerful voice expressed much satisfaction at dying with all his officers about him. "I only hope I have done my duty to your satisfaction, gentlemen?" were the last words he spoke.

In fact, I hardly ever knew a marine

who, if duly encouraged, would not have sacrificed his life rather than depart from his duty. And yet it happens, oddly enough, that by far the most serious professional scrape I ever got into was brought about by the improper conduct of a sergeant of marines, a man in whom I should not have hesitated to place the utmost reliance.

It was in a far-away country; and this man, when on shore on leave with others of the crew, chose, instead of coming off to his time, to send a message on board to say he did not mean to return. At the period when this occurred, I happened to be absent on public business many leagues in the interior of the country. The first lieutenant, however, immediately appealed to the Spanish governor, and begged him to arrest the deserter, and to deliver him up. The governor complied with the first part of the requisition, by securing the offender; but refused to send him on board, unless the commanding officer pledged himself that the marine should not be punished. To this the first lieutenant would not consent; and letters, stating all

the circumstances, were sent off to me. As I expected to be able to return in a few days to the port, when I had no doubt of being able to settle the affair, not only without losing the man, but without committing myself by any such pledge, I merely sent a request to the governor that the deserter might be detained till I came back. The truth is, I felt pretty sure that, in the course of five minutes' conversation with his excellency, I could accomplish more than I could hope to attain by a hundred 'oficios,' or despatches, in the art of multiplying and mystifying which, those excellent but long-winded hidalgos, the Spanish functionaries, far excel the diplomatists of any other land. I saw clearly that, by a slight modification of the governor's proposal, I should eventually regain my stray sheep; and, in the meantime, any mischievous effect on the rest of my crew would be prevented, by the unsuccessful result of the first experiment of desertion. The wo-begone countenance of the poor marine, daily exhibited through the bars of the prison-house, and gradually extending in length as it dimi-

nished in width, had a wonderful effect in reconciling the others who were on shore ‘ on liberty,’ as it is called, to the necessity of coming off to their leave.

Unfortunately, however, for all parties, the official business which carried me to the country accumulated so much on my hands, that I could not possibly return to the ship within the time calculated upon, and the sergeant’s detention was prolonged not merely from day to day, but, as it proved, from week to week. As he was well treated by the Spaniards, (though, to be sure, the fare of a Spanish guard-house is not the most sumptuous,) this would have been of no importance at all, but for a technical consequence which followed, perhaps without my being able to prevent it, even had I duly taken it into consideration, which I certainly did not.

The regulations of the Navy require the ship’s company to be mustered every week, and a mark or check to be placed against the names of all those who are absent, either with or without leave. When any one is checked on three consecutive muster-days, ‘ without leave,’

the rules of the service require that the letter R be put against the name of the absentee, which means 'Run,' and subjects the offender to the loss of his wages, besides some other awkward penalties. Now, it so fell out, that during the period I was detained on duty in the country, three muster-days occurred, and, of course, as I neglected to transmit any specific instructions, three checks 'without leave' were placed against the sergeant's name. In legal strictness, therefore, an R ought now to have been affixed to the name on the muster-book; but I could not reconcile it either to my conscience, or to my sense of public duty, to take this step, when I discovered, at the first interview I had with the governor, that the deserter had all along only waited my sanction to return to the ship. The sergeant's absence from muster, therefore, was clearly my act, and not his; for at any one moment during the three weeks of his detention I might have transferred him to the ship, by merely speaking those words which I did in the end not only speak, but put into writing.

The only pledge I gave to the governor was, that the deserter should not be flogged; a promise I could make with great ease, since this description of punishment is never applied to men holding the rank of sergeant. To avoid even the appearance of subterfuge, however, I explained this point fully to the governor before he gave the soldier up, and told him I could not answer for any other punishment which His Majesty's government might please to order when the ship arrived in England.

At the risk of complicating my story a little, but in order to give some insight into the intricate workings and conflicting responsibilities of our singular profession, I feel tempted to mention another circumstance which took place at the very period when I was thus unconsciously getting myself into a scrape about the sergeant. The orders under which I acted required me to proceed to certain ports, there to remain for a given time, and then to touch at several other places, in execution of various specified duties. But when I reached the harbour at which

the sergeant deserted, I found the country revolutionised, most of the authorities to whom I was accredited no longer in the field, and nearly every thing upon which I had reason to believe my orders were grounded swept away. Such being the case, I took upon me to suppose that a literal compliance with instructions framed under such a different view of public affairs, would have been any thing but my duty. After much discussion and consideration, therefore, I yielded to the requisitions made to me by the resident merchants, ventured to break my orders, and incurred the formidable responsibility of independent action. In extensive and remote stations, officers must often, of absolute necessity, be called upon in this way to act for themselves. Indeed, it is obvious, that a man who has not strength of mind to do so, will be very apt to counteract the wishes of his employers, instead of complying with them, by adhering to the mere letter of instructions, applied to circumstances which no longer exist.

At the same time, it is clear that his conduct, from the instant he adopts a

line of his own, will be judged by the final result much more than by any statement he can make of the aspect which affairs bore at the place and period of his independent decision. If events, upon the whole, shall have turned out in a manner satisfactory to his employers, he may possibly escape censure, or even be considered a man of sound discretion, whom it may be useful to employ on similar occasions in future. But if the measures adopted by an officer who, upon his own responsibility, breaks his orders, shall have the effect of deranging the economy of the squadron, and in their consequences lead to more inconvenience than a rigid compliance with his original instructions might have incurred, he must lay his account with receiving the penalty of disobedience, or, at all events, submit to the mortifying charge of defective professional judgment.

As I approached the point, therefore, where I expected to fall in with my commander-in-chief, I felt by no means at ease. The motives which had induced me to break my orders appeared sadly

weakened by time and distance; and the possible indirect mischief of my having ventured to think and act for myself, swelled hugely before my mind's eye. I began likewise to apprehend that my compromise about the sergeant might not bear official scrutiny; so that it required all my resolution to put a good face on the matter. The result, which, I own, was unexpected, seems not only so curious, but, I think, so instructive, that I shall give it in detail.

The commander-in-chief happened not to be in the port at which I arrived; so that I had to state my reasons in writing on both the subjects alluded to. In a few weeks I received two official letters, and a private note. The despatch which I first opened contained rather a sharp, but a perfectly proper, reprimand for having departed from my orders, which it appeared the circumstances of the case, as stated by me, did not justify. I opened the other letter with increased fear and trembling; but it contained, to my great joy, a full approval of all I had done about the sergeant. The private note (which I wish

I could feel authorised to publish), contained some admirable professional advice, written in a tone so friendly, that even if the censure which this most judicious of commanding officers thought it his duty to pass upon me had been much more severe, I must have kissed the rod with gratitude as well as respect.

Of course, I attempted no justification; and, indeed, I must have belied my own principles of discipline if I had thought of such a thing for one instant. The fact of my having adopted a line according to the best of my judgment could essentially have no weight in deciding the real merits of a case of which my superior was the only judge officially responsible to the country. Having, therefore, submitted the whole matter to him, without any qualification or reserve, I was bound, as soon as he said so, to admit that I had erred, and that the censure was just. He ordered me, however, on my arrival at Spithead, to report all the circumstances of both these cases to the Admiralty. This I did with rather less apprehension than attended me abroad, for I made quite sure

of obtaining, at least, their Lordships' approbation of my address in managing to recover the deserter, with which the commodore had expressed himself so much satisfied.

I never was more grievously mistaken in my life; for, by return of post, down came a rattling despatch disapproving strongly of the whole transaction, and calling upon me to state in writing whether or not the sergeant had been checked as absent without leave three times; if so, their lordships added, it appeared, by my own shewing, that I had been "guilty of false muster," in not putting an R against his name. Here was a mess! The vision, the terrific vision of a court-martial danced before my eyes; and for false muster, too! as if I had been accessory in a scheme for cheating His Majesty out of three weeks' provisions!

Of course, in my reply, I made out the best story I could; that is, I stated the simple facts of the case. As, however, the sergeant, culpable as he no doubt was, had clearly been prevented, not by his own act, but by my indecision, from appearing

at muster, I could by no means admit that an R ought to have been placed against his name. Indeed, I would certainly have submitted to the loss of my commission rather than have given up that point.

I made no further attempt to justify my conduct in the matter, still less did I presume to defend the terms of the arrangement into which I had entered with the Spanish authorities, and of which their lordships so highly disapproved. Several of my brother-officers at Portsmouth, whom I consulted in this dilemma, advised me by all means to send up the letter of my commander-in-chief approving of that very compromise with the governor for which the Admiralty now reprimanded me. But this I conceived could have no good effect. Had I sent the commodore's approval, in the first instance, as perhaps I ought to have done, along with the despatches detailing the transaction, I might have escaped some part of the 'sound wigging' under which I was now made to smart. But it seemed quite obvious, that no subsequent approbation of the commander-in-chief could alter the original

character of the negotiation into which I had entered with the Spanish authorities, and of which the Government at home were the only proper judges. By producing the commodore's letter, therefore, I should have only involved him in the scrape, without getting myself free from it in the least. So I 'backed it out' alone, as poor Jack says, and the affair gradually blew over.

I confess, that the important principle in discipline, of its being an officer's duty to submit patiently to censure, was here put to a pretty severe test. When lecturing my own people upon the impropriety of setting up a justification, I had often endeavoured to impress upon their minds that an officer had no right to do more than lay before his superiors all the circumstances of the case which influenced his decision; and that afterwards it became an essential part of the duty of obedience to admit the justice of the sentence pronounced by the competent authorities. It would, therefore, have been a base departure from my own system to have set about perseveringly to justify what, on

professional principles, I was now bound to consider wrong.

As to pleading the goodness of my intentions, I never dreamed of that folly, since the time I first heard the witty saying of a distinguished oriental diplomatist, who declared, that "Every well-intentioned man in public life ought to be hanged!"—a paradox, by the way, which might furnish the text of a neat chapter in the history of discipline. For it is clear, in the first place, that since, as a matter of course, an officer's intentions are always supposed to be right, it is nonsense to assume that as a valid reason for doing wrong, which has never been called in question; and in the next place, it seems no less clear, that if a man have nothing but his good intentions to bring into play, without talents or experience to give them useful direction, he is much better out of the way altogether, as far at least as the public service is concerned.

Officially speaking, all this is obvious enough, and the public service could not long proceed upon any other principle. Still, although a well-grounded faith in

the solidity of these doctrines may teach us not to argue, but to obey, there must, and ought to be, a limit to submission, beyond which an officer is not entitled to yield, in consideration of the dignity of his station, which it is clearly an important part of his duty to preserve entire. It occurred to me, therefore, some weeks after the correspondence alluded to had passed, and the ship was paid off, that I might advantageously hold some friendly communication with one of the members of the Admiralty on the subject of my recent official castigation. I, accordingly, begged a private interview with one of the Board, an Admiral whose knowledge of the service, soundness of judgment in all things, and fairness of decision, are acknowledged throughout the profession. On being admitted, I addressed him in the following words:—

"I hope, sir, that in the unpleasant correspondence which has lately passed between the Admiralty and myself, I have submitted, as an officer ought to do, to the will of his superiors?"

He slightly nodded assent. I went on.

"But, sir, as I am a young officer, whose heart is sincerely in his profession, and who looks to it as his first object in life, it becomes of some importance to me to lessen, if I can by any fair means, the unfavourable impression which must have been produced by what has passed."

"Well! what have you got to say? You were quite wrong about the sergeant; you had no authority to enter into a compromise with the local government."

"I have been taught to understand that, sir," I replied; "nevertheless, had I acted otherwise, I must have departed from what I knew to be my duty."

"The deuce you would! How is that?"

"It was the practice," I continued, "of the commander-in-chief under whose orders I sailed, before he sent any officer on a distant and complicated service, such as that on which I was employed, to explain very fully what his wishes were on particular points, as well as on the general objects of the mission. His method of accomplishing this purpose was, to invite to his house the captain whom he proposed to send to a distance, and to give

him board and lodging for a week or ten days, as the case might require. The intimacy of habits produced by actually living together, afforded ample opportunities for discussing the nature and objects of the intended service in all their bearings; and as the commodore, with much consideration and kindness, encouraged us to put queries to him upon all the points of difficulty likely to arise, and never hesitated to incur the responsibility of giving a definite answer to our questions, we gradually became fully possessed of his general wishes, and likewise obtained the advantage of his advice in specific cases. Thus, we started eventually more distinctly aware of what was required to be done, than if ten quires of foolscap had been covered with directions."

"Well, well, Captain Hall," said the Admiral, getting rather impatient at my long story, "I dare-say that was a very good plan; but what has it to do with the case of your sergeant?"

"Much," I replied; "for it did so happen that, in the course of the time I lived with the commodore, I actually put

to him this very case, which afterwards arose. And to prove that I did not misapprehend my commanding officer's wishes, I beg to shew you the letter in which he acknowledges my report, and entirely approves of what I did."

I then pulled out of my pocket the official approbation I had received abroad, and handed it to my friend, the Lord of the Admiralty. He read it, and exclaimed,

"Why, this certainly is a complete justification of your proceedings, so far as you are concerned. But why did not you send it up to us when you were censured?"

"Because, sir, at all times, and on principle, I dislike setting up a justification; nor had I any mind on this particular occasion to fly in the teeth of their Lordships, by a statement which would only have had the effect of including the commander-in-chief in the scrape, without relieving me from one jot of the censure grounded upon the error I appear to have committed. As I was at least as much a party in the arrangements as my commanding officer, no subsequent appro-

bation of his could entirely exonerate me."

"Very true," he replied, after a pause. "But suppose we should call the commander-in-chief to account for what has been done?"

"You undoubtedly can, sir," I said; "but you will, I hope, recollect, that there is nothing official under my hand tending to exculpate myself at the commodore's expense.—The communication I have now made is entirely private."

He laughed, shook hands with me, bid me think no more of the matter, and assured me the affair would do me no harm at head-quarters. Accordingly I never heard more of it from that hour to this. But what interested and surprised me a good deal afterwards, was to learn, incidentally, that although the Government so highly disapproved of my arrangements respecting the sergeant, no fault was ever found with my departure from the sailing orders of the commander-in-chief. Thus, the following curious set of professional cross purposes came into play, exhibiting a fair specimen of the

difficult and intricate nature of a naval officer's responsibilities in command of a ship on a foreign station. Here had I been sent to a great distance to execute an extensive public service, in the course and progress of which I found things so different from what I knew they had been reckoned at the time my orders were dated, that I was forced to take upon me to deliberate whether it was my duty to carry them into execution literally, or whether I ought to modify them so as to suit the altered circumstances. In the end I adopted a line which my immediate superior highly disapproved of, while the Government at home were rather pleased than otherwise with this breach of orders, because the course I pursued happened eventually to square with their particular views at the time I made my report. On the other hand, the Admiralty wigged me soundly for another diplomatic proceeding, with which proceeding my immediate commanding officer expressed himself perfectly satisfied!

Now, it would be the easiest thing in the world to rig up a good growl out of all

this; and to shew how unreasonable and inconsistent are the official ways of official men, and how very hard it is on the junior servants of the public to be hacked about and reprimanded, right and left, when they are acting all for the best. But, in the first place, such is not, by any means, my taste; and in the next, such is not my view of the merits of the case. I see no hardship in the matter—quite the contrary; for I can distinctly recognise in these very difficulties and endless diversities some of the highest sources of interest which belong to our service, and marking out the most certain road to distinction for an officer of abilities, professional knowledge, and genuine public spirit.

It seems, indeed, quite clear that an officer is not fit to be trusted with any command of importance who shrinks selfishly and timidly from the responsibility of acting in the manner which he conscientiously and deliberately considers the best for the public service; but who, rather than incur this risk, chooses to shield himself from direct censure by adhering literally to orders applicable only to

circumstances which no longer exist. What, I should like to know, is the meaning of the word responsibility, if it be not a readiness to answer for our conduct, and to submit respectfully to the disapprobation of those in authority over us? And not only to submit in form, but to acquiesce cheerfully and sincerely in the better judgment of those superiors, whom it is confessedly our duty, and must always essentially be our best and most manly interest, to obey out and out?

There is, perhaps, nothing within the whole range of active service more infallibly characteristic of a mean-spirited officer, than that too cautious avoidance of responsibility which is so often closely allied to the vulgar itch for justification. What can it ever be to the great and absorbing interests of the public service of the country, that lieutenant so-and-so should fancy himself a more clever officer than his captain?—or that, under all the circumstances of the place and time, the worthy lieutenant might perhaps be justified in what he did, instead of being censurable for the untoward results which

have unexpectedly flowed from his well-intentioned but ill-judged proceedings? No government could possibly have time for all this special pleading; and, therefore, every officer who (to use the old cockpit phrase) is 'worth his salt,' will resolutely make up his mind to have his professional conduct judged, not solely, or even chiefly, by the apparent situation of affairs at the time he was called upon to act, but more or less, in every case, by the aspect which they happen to bear in the eyes of his superiors, at the moment he makes his report. If, fortunately for him, events have taken a favourable turn, his conduct will not be disapproved of; or it may, possibly, be commended; but if, on the other hand, events shall not have turned out to the satisfaction of his employers, even although, at the time of breaking his orders, he may have acted for the very best, he must expect to be well hauled over the coals. Under these expectations, a man should invariably act up to the true spirit of his duty, vastly regardless of any consequences to himself; and while he thinks exclusively of the

public service, he should always make up his mind to take such personal consequences in good part, whatever they be, and manfully to apply them to the purposes of future instruction, instead of querulously seeking to raise out of them sources of discontent and virtual disobedience. In short, a strict adherence to the disinterested spirit of technical duty—happen what may to himself—appears to be as binding upon a professional man as the moral obligations of truth are binding upon general society. The smallest departure from either, for any motive, whether it be to gain favour or to avoid censure,—that is to say, the slightest unfair modification of duty, or the faintest shade of untruth,—are alike destructive to the character of an officer and of a gentleman. Such, at least, is the most approved theory of naval responsibility now extant in the service.

But, I perceive these speculations (as will happen) have led me far away from our jolly friends the red jackets, to whom, as trusty and cordial friends, it is always agreeable to return.

During the formidable mutiny at the Nore, as every one must remember to have heard, the marines were true to a man—never swerving, even for one moment, from their loyalty. In all probability, it was chiefly in consequence of their admirable conduct on that important occasion, that they were honoured at the peace with the proud distinction of "ROYAL," by which they are still known. The London Gazette of the 1st of May, 1802, runs in these terms:

"His Majesty has been graciously pleased to signify his commands, that, in consideration of the meritorious services of the marines during the late war, the corps shall in future be styled the Royal Marines."

Assuredly, never were honours more judiciously bestowed; and well might the gallant historian of his corps exclaim, "Here my narrative reaches its close, and I will not dive into futurity; but thus much I will venture to anticipate, that, whether in union with his gallant brethren of the fleet, or blended with our disciplined armies on the shore, the

MARINE SOLDIER will never forfeit that distinguished merit which he now holds, of loyalty to his King, fidelity to his Country, and unshaken valour against the enemies of both."*

In a well-known instance of mutiny on board a frigate, the operation of these principles was shewn in a most striking manner. The captain was one of that class of officers, now happily extinct, whose chief authority consisted in severity. To such an excess was this pushed, that his ship's company, it appears, were at length roused to actual revolt, and proceeded in a tumultuous, but apparently resolute, body to the quarter-deck. It is extremely curious to remark, that the same stern system of discipline which had driven the seamen into revolt, had likewise been applied to the marines without weakening their paramount sense of duty under any circumstances. Such, at all events, was the force of habit and discipline, that

* Historical Review of the Royal Marine Corps, from its institution to 1803. By Lieutenant Alex. Gillespie, R.M.

when the captain ordered them to fall in, they formed instantly, as a matter of course, across the deck. At his further orders, they loaded their muskets with ball, and screwed on their bayonets. Had the corps now proved traitors, all must have been lost; but the captain, who, with all his faults of temper and system, was yet a great, and gallant, and clear-headed officer, calculated with good reason upon a different result. Turning first to the mutineers, he called out,

"I'll attend to you directly!"

And then addressing the soldiers, he said, with a tone of such perfect confidence of manner, and so slightly interrogative as to furnish its own answer,

"You'll stand by your king and country?"

The marines thus appealed to said nothing, but grasped their fire-arms with an air of fixed resolution. It was exactly one of those occasions when silence gives the most expressive of all consents; and the captain, assured that if he were now only true to himself, the soldiers would be true to their duty, exclaimed,

"Then, royal and loyal marines, we don't care a damn for the blue jackets!"

And, stepping forwards, he seized the two principal ring-leaders by the throat, one with each hand, and calling out, in a voice of thunder, to the rest, instantly to move off the quarter-deck, he consigned the astonished and deserted culprits to the master-at-arms, by whom they were speedily and quietly placed in double irons —and the whole mutiny was at an end!

The eventful fate of this vigorous-minded, but over-rigid man, is fraught with much painful but valuable instruction to persons of every rank in every service. Its importance, indeed, will be most felt, or ought to be most felt, and, I believe, is very generally acknowledged to be so, by those who, like this ill-starred officer, are placed in command of His Majesty's ships.

The captain in question was not less remarkable for his bravery than he was unreasonably severe in his punishments; and though he is said to have harassed his people in what seemed the most unfeeling manner, the sole object of his relentless administration was to prepare

his ship for fighting a good action. Those who knew him best describe him as having been prompted by public spirit alone; though, unfortunately, as it proved, he had adopted a most injudicious method of executing his official trust. It is well known, at least, that the most earnest desire of his heart was to fall in with an enemy of equal or even superior force, in order that he might prove how efficient his plan of discipline really was, in spite of its unpopularity. He thus hoped to furnish a triumphant practical answer to his brother-officers, who often advised him to adopt a less rigid system. The successful issue of the recent mutiny, and his well-grounded confidence in his own resources, had taught him to believe that he could command the services of his people, not only on ordinary occasions, but at moments of utmost need. Here was his grand mistake. The obedience he exacted at the point of the lash had no heartiness in it; and when the time came that the argument of force could no longer be used, and when the bayonets of the marines had lost their terrors, there was read to him,

and in letters of blood, the bitterest lesson of retributive justice that perhaps was ever pronounced to any officer since the beginning of the naval service.

The frigate under command of this energetic officer, when in company with another ship, chased two French frigates off the Isle of France. As his ship sailed much faster than her consort, he soon outstripped her, and closed with the enemy single-handed. The Frenchmen, seeing only one ship near them, and the other far astern, shortened sail, and prepared for the attack, which, however, they could hardly suppose would be undertaken by one ship. In this expectation, however, they underrated the gallant spirit of her commander, who, unquestionably, was one of the bravest officers in the service. It is said, also, that he deemed himself, at this critical moment of his fate, one of the most fortunate of men, to possess such an opportunity for distinction. Seeing the enemy's frigates within his reach, and well knowing what his men could execute if they chose,—never dreaming for a moment that they would

fail him at this pinch—he exclaimed, in the greatest rapture, "We shall take them both! steer right for them! and now, my brave lads, stand to your guns, and shew what you are made of!"

This was the last order he ever gave! The men obeyed, and stood to their guns, like gallant fellows as they were: but they stood there only to be shot to death. They folded their arms, and neither loaded nor fired a single shot, in answer to the pealing broadsides which the unresisted and astonished enemy were pouring fast in upon them! Now had arrived the dreadful moment of revenge for them—as their captain, who was soon struck down like the rest, lived only long enough to see the cause of his failure, and to witness the shocking sight of his gallant and self-devoted crew cut to pieces, rather than move their hands to fire one gun to save the credit of their commander—all consideration for their own lives, or for the honour of their country, appearing to be absorbed in their desperate determination to prove at last how completely they had it in their power to shew their sense of the unjust treatment they had received.

There are several versions of this terrible story current in the Navy. Which of them is the most correct I have no means of judging; but that here given is, I think, the most generally received. All these accounts appear to agree, however, that the men were driven into mutiny by excessive severity: and I have little hesitation in believing, that hardly any other incident during the last half century, has indirectly contributed more to the cause of good discipline. By this term I mean that genuine system of habitual order and cheerfulness which has for its purpose and ultimate aim the strenuous exertion of every faculty of every officer and man on board, at all times and under all circumstances. This fearful example has forced even the most unreflecting or careless-hearted men amongst us to think seriously upon the danger, as well as the folly, of urging matters too far, and of straining the bow till the string is ready to snap at the first great trial.

It is a task infinitely more grateful, and not a whit less instructive, to trace the admirable effects of the opposite system

of discipline; and to mark the prodigious influence which personal regard and confidence in a leader may exercise over public affairs of the highest national importance.

In the year 1810 it was resolved by the Government of India to send an expedition against the Isle of France, or Mauritius, as it is sometimes called; and General Abercrombie assembled a large force at Madras, which it was arranged should be embarked in the autumn in a fleet of transports, and convoyed to the point of attack by His Majesty's ship Ceylon.

As the French naval power in the Indian seas, which for some years had been considerable, continued to maintain a degree of rivalry with the English unknown in other quarters of the globe, it became of the utmost consequence to the success of the projected invasion to keep down, by means of a close blockade, the exertions of the enemy's squadron at the Isle of France, their principal naval station in the East. Had there not been a decided superiority afloat on our side, either of

numbers or of prowess, or both, it was obvious that the approach of an expedition for the purpose of attacking the island must have been attended with the most imminent danger.

The first grand point, therefore, was, to keep the French squadron in due check; a service which was intrusted to Captain Rowley, now Admiral Sir Josias Rowley, who then commanded the Boadicea frigate. A more judicious, or, as it proved, a more fortunate selection, in every point of view, was never made since England possessed a navy. Captain Rowley was already well known in the service, not only as an officer of experience and abilities, but as one who had acquired, in more than a common degree, the professional confidence and personal esteem of the people who served under him. At the same time he was, in the true sense of the word, a very strict officer; for he shewed himself so just in distinguishing merit, and so temperate and judicious in correcting negligence or guilt, that he invariably ended by winning the affection as well as the respect even of those whom it was his duty

to chastise. So entire, indeed, and so general, had this confidence become in their chief, that, after the commencement of the brilliant course of service which I am about to relate, the officers and men under his command would have engaged, at his bidding, in actions of the most desperate character, without the slightest hesitation. They had, in fact, no thought or will but his; and as they loved him with all the warmth of the heartiest private regard, they felt proud to acknowledge that their captain's honour and renown were as essentially in their keeping as the glory of their country, and they worked and fought most nobly under that generous impulse which so often renders it a far higher pleasure to be useful to others whom we respect and love, than to seek our own selfish advancement.

The next thing was to secure a point of rendezvous, and for this purpose a force was despatched to take possession of the Island of Bourbon, lying near the Mauritius, but which, though much larger than the Isle of France, was not fortified, from not being considered of one-tenth part of

its importance. The principal advantage gained by this capture was the possession of Port St. Paul's, in which our ships might refit, and the invading army establish its head-quarters, preparatory to the grand effort against the neighbouring island.

Under their accomplished leader, the British squadron were so disposed, that the enemy became at last completely blockaded, and could not venture to shew a single pendant beyond their inner harbours, where they lay protected by strong batteries. It happened, unfortunately, that during Captain Rowley's absence from the blockading force, stationed off Port South East, the second in command, whom he had left in charge of the ships, conceived that a favourable opportunity had occurred for attacking the enemy's frigates. He could not resist the temptation of making a dash at the glorious prize seemingly within his reach; but never was any attempt followed by more disastrous results. The English frigates, four in number, having grounded on unknown shoals, the French warped theirs into such positions that their broadsides acted with the pre-

cision of fixed batteries, and, co-operating with the land fortifications, entirely demolished the assailants. His Majesty's ships Sirius and Magicienne were burned, the Iphigenia and Nereide captured; and of all the crews of these prime frigates, only one officer and a dozen men escaped in the sole remaining boat to tell their unfortunate tale to the commodore.

This formidable loss of four out of the six frigates composing the English squadron took place on the night of the 23d of August and morning of the 24th. On the 27th, or within three days afterwards, Captain Rowley, in his solitary frigate, the Boadicea, appeared off the harbour. He had picked up the boat at sea, and had still some hopes that one, if not two of the ships, or, at all events, the officers and men who had retreated to an island in the bay, might yet be recovered. In this, however, he was disappointed; and the triumphant enemy, now become much the stronger party, instantly sent out a couple of ships and chased him away. He had nothing for it but to leave the Isle of France, to proceed to Port St. Paul's

in the Island of Bourbon, and there to collect what force he could, to stem the tide which by this time was making so strongly against him. An officer of less vigour of mind, or less familiar with the resources which appear to fall naturally into the hands of men of genius and energy, might well have been disheartened by these reverses. And—what is still more important to remark—had he possessed in a smaller degree the confidence of his officers and crew, or felt less secure of their entire devotion to his own cause and that of the country (which, in their minds, were identical), it would have been utterly impossible for Capt. Rowley to have accomplished the services which followed.

On the 12th of September, a little more than a fortnight after the disaster of Port South-east, two of the enemy's frigates, the Astrea and Iphigénie, appeared off Port St. Paul's, no doubt intending either to attack the Boadicea or to blockade her. But our gay commodore, who was not a man to rest quiet under such a threat, tripped his anchor immediately, and, accompanied by the Otter sloop-of-war and the Stanch gun-brig, sailed directly out to

meet the French frigates. Just as he was getting under weigh, he received a report from the signal-post on the hill, that an English ship was heaving in sight round the point. This proved to be the Africaine, now the only remaining frigate of the squadron besides the Boadicea. The enemy, seeing the new comer, hauled off in a moment, and made all sail; but before night, the Africaine had gained so much upon them as to keep them in sight after dark, although, owing to the Boadicea's inferiority of sailing, Capt. Rowley was left far astern, while the Otter and Stanch had dropped quite out of sight. Whether the enemy's ships shortened sail to let the Africaine come up, that they might engage her at an advantage, or whether the Africaine outsailed the enemy, is not exactly known. That she closed with them between three and four in the morning is certain; and likewise, that in the course of not many minutes she was completely knocked to pieces, and her captain and most of her crew killed by the cross fire of the two French frigates, placed one on each side of her.

When the day dawned, poor Rowley

had the bitter mortification to see one more of his unfortunate squadron in possession of the enemy. But he was not so fool-hardy or absurd as to risk the Boadicea, his sole remaining ship, in so unequal a contest with two powerful frigates, apparently not the least damaged by the action, and flushed with the unexpected and unexampled successes by which the French arms afloat had been crowned during the preceding three weeks. He therefore tacked, and stood back till he was reinforced by his trusty little friends the Otter and Stanch; then again putting about, he dashed right at the victors in the recent fight, exactly as he had intended to have done the day before, when he got under weigh from St. Paul's, and before the poor Africaine hove in sight.

The discreet Frenchmen, however, to whom the Boadicea was well known, appeared quite satisfied with the honour and glory of having taken one frigate that morning; for they not only abandoned their prize, but made all sail towards the Isle of France, leaving the Boadicea to recapture and carry back the English

frigate, out of which the enemy had removed nearly all the men who survived that deplorable conflict.

This was the first turn of the tide in favour of the British cause. But scarcely had Captain Rowley resumed his anchorage at St. Paul's, where he set actively to work to re-equip the half-demolished Africaine, before he discovered, on the 18th of September, three strange sail in the offing. With his wonted alacrity, he once more got under weigh, and, accompanied by his two satellites, put to sea immediately. One of the strangers had a crippled frigate in tow, which she immediately cast off upon the Boadicea shewing herself, and made all sail away. The third ship, a French 44 of the first class, bore up to protect her disabled companion, now clearly made out to be yet another captured British frigate! Undisturbed by this fresh disaster, or rather animated into still higher vigour, the gallant Rowley at once carried his ship smack alongside the Venus, then wearing the broad pendant of Commodore Hamelin, the senior officer of the French squadron. The

Boadicea's crew, who for the last month had been eagerly panting to have, in their turn, a regular fight, or, as they called it, a fair brush with the enemy, no sooner saw the French commodore's ship inevitably within their reach, than, of their own accord, they leaped on the hammocks, and, actuated by a simultaneous impulse, gave three hearty cheers. In the next instant they were all again at their guns, which they served so briskly and so well, that in a short time the Venus (the largest French ship in those seas) struck her colours, after a very gallant resistance.

It was then discovered, that the captured English frigate seen in tow before the action, was His Majesty's ship Ceylon, from Madras, having the commander-in-chief of the expedition, General Abercrombie, and his staff, on board, on their way to the attack of the Isle of France. They had fallen in, a few hours before, with the Venus and another French frigate, and after a furious action had been obliged to strike their colours. Captain Rowley sent his assistant sloops to take possession of the Ceylon, and the whole

party returned once more to their old anchorage of St. Paul's.

There was still, however, much to be done; for although Captain Rowley had captured the French commodore, and retaken the Africaine and Ceylon, none of them were in a state to go to sea, and even if they had been, where was he to muster seamen to fight their guns? These are the moments, however, when thorough-bred zeal and professional knowledge are sure to triumph over difficulties which would defy common-place exertions. The confidence reposed in Rowley's talents, and the personal regard in which he was held by those who knew him, was not confined to his own ship or squadron, but extended with equal practical effect to the officers and men of the land service: so that upon this trying occasion, when the British fortunes in that quarter of the globe were suspended in such equal balance against those of the enemy, that the slightest additional weight acting in either scale might have determined the fate of the whole expedition, the individual popularity of this great officer settled

the question. As it was now known to a certainty that the transports destined for the attack on the Isle of France had sailed from India, there was every reason to fear that the fleet might drop into the jaws of the enemy, who, having swept away the British squadron, possessed the undisputed range of the adjacent seas.

Under these circumstances, Captain Rowley, as we say at sea, 'turned to with a will,' and soon got up a squadron sufficient to drive the enemy once more into their holes. The Africaine's lower masts being so much wounded by shot as to be rendered useless, no time was lost in unstepping those of a recaptured East Indiaman, and placing them on board the frigate. It had also fortunately happened, that the French ship Venus, just before her capture, had fallen in with an English store-ship, out of which she had removed the cargo. Thus a little dock-yard was found stowed away in the hold of the prize.

At all times, the regular army on shore appear to delight in nothing more than working in companionship with their brethren of the blue jacket afloat; but

upon this particular occasion, when the safety, honour, and welfare of the whole squadron, and of a pretty large army to boot, to say nothing of the reputation of the country, were all at stake, the land soldiers worked on board the ships with a degree of vigour and effect, which excited the perfect admiration of the sailors.

In the course of a few weeks, as if by magic, (and the influence of such a mind as Rowley's falls little short of the magician's touch), all four frigates were fitted for sea and again ready for action—re-masted, re-equipped, and re-manned; when, to their great joy, Admiral Bertie, in His Majesty's ship Nisus, arrived from the Cape.

As the seas round the Isle of France were now speedily swept clear of the French squadron, the way was kept open for the invading forces, and the fleet of transports from India reached the island on the 21st of November. On the 29th a landing was effected, and on the 3d of December, 1810, the Isle of France was surrendered to His Britannic Majesty's arms.

Thus, within three months and ten days

from the period when the British squadron were all but annihilated, not only was the island taken, but every one of the French ships likewise. These consisted of six large frigates, three smaller ships of war, five gun-boats, three captured Indiamen, and twenty-eight merchant vessels, besides an immense quantity of stores and valuable goods on shore.

When we consider upon how nice a point, at one critical moment, the whole success or discomfiture of this important public service depended, we cannot give too much praise to the accomplished warrior, to the agency of whose master-spirit alone upon that occasion the country stands so much indebted. No honours, however thickly showered on such a man, could adequately repay these obligations. His truest reward, perhaps, lies in the universal applause of his own professional brethren, who, as they are acquainted with all the details of his exploits, and familiar with their difficulties, are probably the best judges of his merit. Still, if the incidents above related had not taken place at so great a distance from

home, the renown of Sir Josias Rowley would assuredly have proved not less general in the country at large, than it is, and ever must remain, in the Navy. It would, indeed, be difficult to point out in the whole compass of the naval service an example more practically useful of what may be effected by one man, who not only knows his duty himself, and brings his entire heart and soul to bear upon its faithful performance, but who has learned how to secure the co-operation of every one about him. Can there, in short, be higher praise, or any reward which a right-minded officer should more earnestly desire to secure, than is contained in the following passage of the official report of these proceedings?

"A momentary superiority," writes Admiral Bertie, "had been obtained by the enemy, but it was promptly and decisively crushed by the united zeal, judgment, perseverance, skill, and intrepidity of CAPTAIN JOSIAS ROWLEY, the value and importance of whose services, long, conspicuous, and distinguished as they have been, fully justified his being selected as

the senior officer conducting the blockade of the Isle of France. In the present instance," continues the commander-in-chief, in his glowing despatch to the Admiralty, "Captain Rowley almost alone and unsupported, but by the never-failing energies and resources of his active and intelligent mind, under circumstances, as may easily be imagined, of extreme anxiety, mortification, and disappointment, in a few hours not only retook two of His Majesty's ships, but captured also the largest frigate possessed by the enemy in those seas, and thus restored the British naval pre-eminence in that quarter, which his talents had so long successfully contributed to maintain."

THE END.

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Bd.: Ser. 2. Vol. 3

Edinburgh u.a. 1832
It.coll. 224 v-2,3
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10622215-0